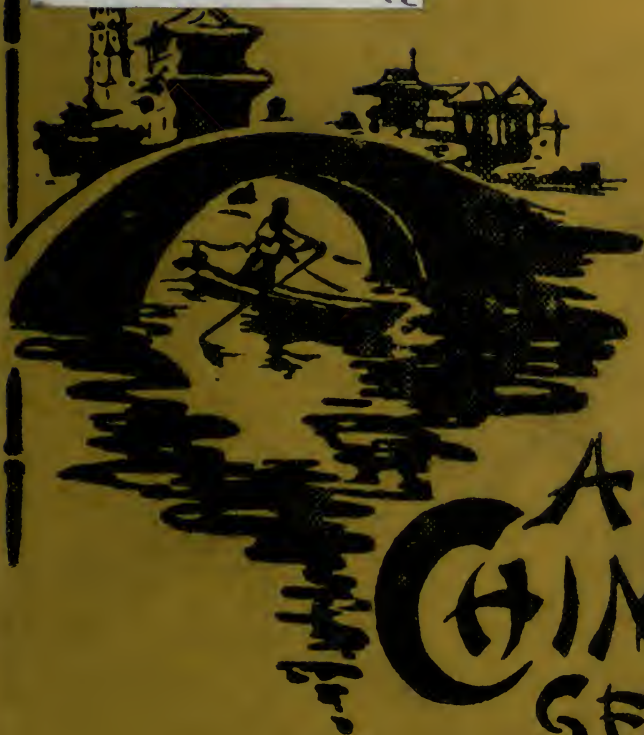


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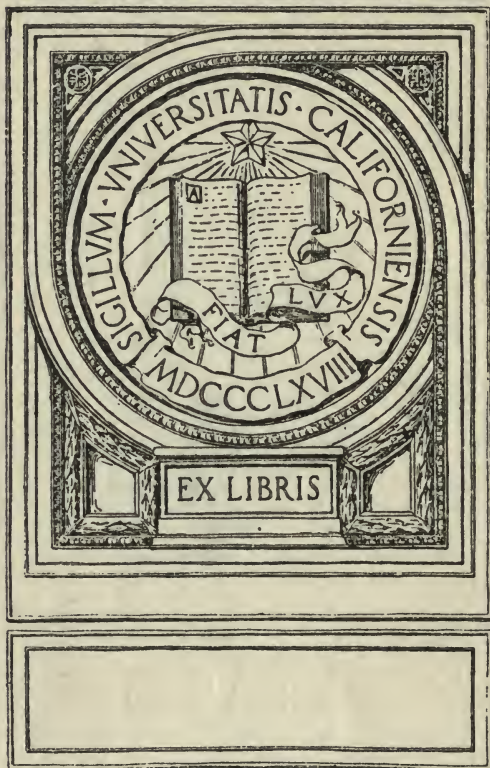


AS THE CHINESE SEE US



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By

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THE CHINESE
SEE US

AS THE CHINESE SEE US

CHAPTER I

INTERNATIONAL ANTIPATHIES

“The superior man is catholic and no partisan.”

—CONFUCIAN ANALECTS.

Vice-Consul West.—I am a little uncertain about the translation of one or two phrases in the Prefect's despatch. Please look through the rough draft on the table, and afterwards I will trouble you to test my mastery of the local tones in a few sentences of colloquial. I am afraid the *patois*, if I get saturated with it, may spoil my enunciation of the Court dialect.

Pundit Tung.—The main idea of the despatch is correctly grasped, but when I have explained the history of two or three technical terms, you will be able to set forth the meaning a little more closely in the English rendering.

Vice-Consul West.—I will soon put the details right, and embody your suggestions in my final copy.

Pundit Tung.—Yes! yes! The tones are good, but you drawl the lower departing a little too much, and the local sound for Buddha is neither a long “u” nor a short “a,” but two parts of the one and three parts of the other. The nasal “ng” you must produce as if you had polypus. Do not let the breath come through the lips; keep the mouth open, and coop up the sound half-way between the throat and the nose. . . . Yes! better. The Vice-Consul will speak like a man of the province in another year, better even than the missionaries.

Vice-Consul West.—Nothing going on of interest in the city just now, I suppose?

Pundit Tung.—The news is scanty, and as savourless as cold rice. The second harvest was not up to the average; business is quiet, and the loafers at the city gates and in the less reputable neighbourhoods are getting a little restless as the end of the year draws near. I was told that two foreigners passed up the river a little while before the setting of the watch last night, and that they were rather roughly handled. They went ashore at the ferry-boat

landing, and the boys began pelting them with chewed sugar-cane, banana husks and lumps of mud. By some mischance or other, they got into the streets of the gambling shops, and the small boys were reinforced by a knot of loafers, who, as usual, hustled them, and threatened them with the knife. A friend who saw the mild riot told me they hurried back to the boat, and no harm befell them beyond a slight wetting. The older of the two in jumping from the bank fell short of the bows and got soaked up to the knees. One of the crew, however, caught him by the wrist and hauled him on board. The gentlemen were probably merchants or travellers, for they did not speak to the crowd in Chinese, and seemed not quite at their ease.

Vice-Consul West.—It is strange they did not call here or send their cards. In a few days we shall have an alarmist paragraph in one of the Hong-Kong papers, saying that the people are extremely hostile to foreigners, and a crisis of trouble is at hand. The town has not the best of reputations, although it is not quite so bad as it is painted.

Pundit Tung.—It was unlucky they should have come ashore just when the schools had been dismissed, and swarms of boys were

buzzing about the streets, and still more unlucky that they should have landed on the side of the creek where the vicious classes live, rather than amongst the respectable shops on the opposite bank. It was their misfortune that they could not chaff the people into smiles by a few sentences of the local *patois*. The Chinese servant on the boat was insolent to the bystanders, and did not mend matters. Had things been just a little different in these particulars, they would have gone back and praised the citizens for their courtesy and friendliness.

Vice-Consul West.—Some travellers do seem to have a trick of smelling out the special places where they will be roughly handled. I rarely meet now with signs of ill-will, and when I go out for a day's shooting, nothing can exceed the kindness of the village folk, although I do cross their Buddhist prejudices against taking life, for notices against shooting birds seem to be stuck up on every wayside shrine and banyan tree. In the temper of the street crowds here I find a distinct improvement. A year or two ago I could not take a walk without seeing half a dozen Chinamen thrust their noses into their sleeves as I passed them, in token of

their disgust and contempt, but that fashion seems to have passed away. I was often tempted to kick the wretches, and would not swear that I was always superior to the temptation. The antipathy seems to die hard in some of the suburbs, and when it has been quiescent for a time, it suddenly awakens in unpleasant and ominous forms.

Pundit Tung.—The feeling perhaps varies with the rumours circulated by native newspapers, which now find their way into every district city, besides the private letters which come to hand from the coast ports. Sometimes there may be local causes of irritation, or foreigners who pass along the streets may blunder through ignorance of our customs. To bring the Hong-Kong method of treating the Chinamen into the interior, is to fire a powder magazine. As a rule, exasperation arises when France is taking new territory in Tonquin, or Japan is scheming to become dominant in Corea, or Russian railways are creeping nearer to our northern frontier; and the exasperation subsides when it is found that the eighteen provinces are not all swallowed up by the mysterious powers of the West.

Vice-Consul West.—I should like to get down

to the real cause of all this ill-will and misunderstanding. Why should your countrymen dislike us even when they receive kindness at our hands? Forget your politeness for once in a while, and be quite candid with me. Do not tell me what you think the Englishman would like to hear, as is the habit with teachers, butlers, cooks and house servants. When I visit the officials, of course they flatter me and my countrymen as though we were fresh incarnations of Confucius and his seventy disciples, come by mail steamer from the Western Paradise; and when I walk through the streets of towns and cities unaccustomed to the presence of Europeans, I am called "imp," "cuckolod," and other epithets, not to be found in either Chinese or English dictionaries. Now I want something about half-way between these two extremes. The foreigner, as you know, is neither a Gâutama Buddha on the one hand, nor an ox-headed demon tormentor on the other.

Pundit Tung.—Do not blame me for saying so, but perhaps the praise is in excess of what is really thought, and the railing of the street crowd is not to be taken literally. The dislike is a tradition of our training. Perhaps the

attitude towards us into which you are trained does not rest upon a true and just appreciation.

Vice-Consul West.—Perhaps not; but I can well believe all you say about the prejudice, for it was absurdly illustrated in a trifling incident which occurred as I was passing through a neighbouring village yesterday. A little child, held by his mother's hand, shrank back with terror as I came in sight, and I heard the mother whisper: "Do not fear. Say 'great merchant' as you pass, and it will be all right." The terror was the effect of false views about the foreigner inculcated in the home, and the flattering vocative, "great merchant," a propitiatory expedient of the moment to put the child on safe terms with a passing adversary. I thought it much like the superstitions of the less instructed people, who seek to turn the enmity of mischief-making spirits by adulation and sacrifice. When the child had been got past the place at which he shied, the old prejudice would doubtless be encouraged, and the "great merchant" would be made once more the "demon" with which to frighten a wilful child.

Pundit Tung.—Perhaps it is so. A strange white face, with plenty of hair about it, projecting

eyes, and limbs uncouthly clothed in tight, short-cut garments, may be guaranteed to affright and terrorise the imagination, especially when such things are associated with stories told in our homes of what the foreign soldiers did in the wars which broke out during the reigns of Tó Kwong and Hām Fung. We are ruled to some extent by the nightmares of our past history. For three thousand years our race, which has both multiplied and incorporated other and less numerous races, has been in partial contact with inferior, not to say cruel tribes. No civilisation has grown up within sight of our own that has not borrowed the good in it from us. You say we are clever imitators only, but we have originated what has been the pattern civilisation of the eastern half of Asia, centuries before you began to dream of art and letters. And the copies of our civilisation adopted in Corea, Japan, Siam and Thibet were on a small and inferior scale. Pre-historic tribes survive in our hills, and down to the present time raid our crops, carry off our cattle, and burn our villages in the valleys abutting on their mountains. These men, who have no letters and no culture, and who play the part of bandits, were the first foreigners we knew. The habit of thought and

speech acquired in hundreds of generations of intercourse with these outsiders is strong upon us, and the image of the Nām Mān or the I Tik is the first picture of a foreigner in the mind. It maintains its position there till it is displaced by something else. Every schoolboy learns about the wild tribes of the classic times, and brings this prepossessed judgment to his outlook upon the strange visitors who have come across the waves in ships.

Vice-Consul West. — But you must surely admit that it is unjust and misleading to apply to the men from great continents beyond the seas, the names used to describe your frontier tribes and the hillmen of your remote mountains, who could not copy your crafts or fit themselves into the complex life of the plains. We have a literature which is broader and more vital than yours, an art which has touched higher levels, although of course we prize your lacquers and porcelains for their colour and quaintness, and your bronzes for their finish and patient detail. Our civilisation is of a new order, and cannot be classed with any told of in the past history of the world.

Pundit Tung.—Well, we know nothing of your literature, and perhaps cannot acquire a

taste for its special beauties. Your art, represented by second-hand picture papers, often displayed for sale on the street-side, in company with photographs from the nude, does not impress us. As to your civilisation, we allow that it is wonderful, but it is so different from our own that the ignorant look upon it as the product of magic, akin to that of the Tauists, and the less ignorant, as an abnormal development of the sense-faculties which have been trained at the expense of the moral. The Vice-Consul himself speaks lightly of the codes of conduct taught by the missionaries, and does not put himself under any obligation to practise their precepts, by conforming to the rites of the Church, unless on the birthday of Jesus. Our own histories tell of great magicians and inventors, but we do not think of ranging Tsō Ts'z, or any of his craft, side by side with Confucius. "The sage spake of morals and not of marvels." The precepts out of which our family life is built we look upon as greater than the craft which gets power out of steam, changes the combinations of gases, and controls and directs the vital principle of the lightning. We classify society into scholars, cultivators of the soil, artisans, and traders. Till we re-

arrange that classification, your civilisation, which is the work of those who belong to the third class only, cannot be esteemed as highly as it is with you.

Vice-Consul West.—But that surely does not justify you in ranking us with barbarians.

Pundit Tung.—Perhaps not, but we act from obstinate prejudice, as your countrymen also do. If you will not blame my bad manners for presuming to say so, I daresay there is physical aversion on both sides, and we each seem to the other as though we belonged to different species. You perhaps remember that when you first came to represent your country at this river-port, a Chinaman from the Eastern suburb called to say that he had a daughter with pink eyes, white hair, and a florid complexion (an albino?) for whom he could not get a betrothal arranged on any terms. He thought that as she was born with a foreigner's physiognomy, the Vice-Consul might be willing to take her as a concubine, and the price should be very cheap. He had made up his mind when she was a little girl to destroy her, but the oracle in the temple had twice given the answer that it would be unlucky. I mention it to show the impression made upon the

average Chinese mind by foreign hair, and foreign complexion, not to speak of foreign dress. Everybody says the Vice-Consul himself is majestic in appearance, and has an intelligent eye.

Vice-Consul West.—But the man was a lunatic, and could never have observed so closely as an average Chinaman. If you do keep your eyes half shut we give you credit for being able to see a great deal, and to see correctly.

Pundit Tung.—I am not sure we are more careless in such matters than the men of your esteemed country. Lō Kwok had seen perhaps not more than four or five foreigners when he fell into the delusion that his daughter had European hair and complexion. I have also heard of Europeans who for weeks could only distinguish the cook from one of the chair-bearers by the fact that he carried a market basket with a weighing-stick on his arm. The carelessness is on both sides, and concerns other things besides face and feature. If our ignorant classes, and even our mandarins, have spoken of your countrymen as the Yung and the Mān, you have rated us less highly than you rate the Greeks and the Romans, and

have spoken of our literature as old-world lumber. Your view of our past history, our ethics, our philosophy, our family and civic virtues, is as defective and misleading as our view of foreign geography and Western customs. A few of the consuls and the missionaries have looked into our sacred books and taken the trouble to understand us, but a consul is satisfied when he can translate a despatch or conduct an interview without the help of his interpreter, and the average missionary seems to think it is a waste of time to learn more colloquial than will enable him to communicate with the common people. As to the few consuls, or vice-consuls, who learn enough of the local dialects to converse freely, they are sent after a year or two to other stations, where different dialects are in use, and their knowledge is academic. Not one in a hundred of the great merchants and their clerks could hail a boat, ask the way, or call for a cup of tea in a refreshment-house. The few of you who have studied Chinese books say we are a learned people, and at the same time despise us. Our k^ü-yan, tsun-sz, hon-lam, who are honoured as princes in their own neighbourhoods, are flounced and chivied

and shouted at by your countrymen as though they were mere coolies. The boards inscribed with the literary titles of our scholars, and carried before them in full dress processions, are as incomprehensible to you as the badges of your secret societies are to us. In fact, the Chinaman is preferred who is not learned. There can be no lasting and acceptable intercourse unless we can talk about history, literature, poetry, or some topic fit for the educated. We soon tire of hearing about foreign countries and their customs. It is spicier to read "Wonders of the Seas and Mountains," if one has a bent to that kind of ware.

Vice-Consul West.—But the members of the Diplomatic and Consular services at least revere the learning of the country, although foreign merchants laugh at them, saying they have fallen into the ways of the Chinaman; and native newspapers so far overstate the appreciation avowed by some of us, that they say we have found a higher attraction in Confucius than in the traditional teaching of Jesus. Even missionaries, who have come to give you what they think a more perfect religion, have no censure to pass upon the precepts of the sacred books.

Pundit Tung.—Much of that is of course the language of compliment, and we take a little off for politeness, just as you do not allow yourselves to be entirely misled by the extravagant flatteries our officials pay to your taste, learning, and virtue, whilst they offer you sweets and tea. Of those who come from the West, the rank and file never take the trouble to learn our language at all, and of those who learn our language few dive into the treasures of our literature and prepare the way for intelligent intercourse with us. You know the story of Tsz Kung, a disciple of Confucius. Some one had said he was greater than his master, and he replied by a parable. "My wall is only shoulder-high. One may peep over it and see what is of worth in the apartments. The wall of my master is several fathoms high. If one does not gain the door and enter, he cannot see the beauty of the ancestral temple nor the sumptuous attire of the officers attending there." The foreigners who become Chinese scholars peep over the wall and do not enter by the door, and as to the rest, they treat the temple of our literature as if it were a cow-byre, and pass by on the other side. Is it any wonder that we live together without any pretence at social

intercourse. Our dealings with each other are official or strictly mercenary.

Vice-Consul West.—But foreigners are birds of passage. We are here for a time only, and you are here always, and will have to do with those who come after us. It is quite as easy for you to learn our language; and you may have occasion to use it to the end of your days. You might inaugurate the period of a more perfect understanding by making a study of our literature.

Pundit Tung.—Some of our younger generation do learn it, because it is profitable, but from no other motive. Our native traders think you speak nothing better than the coolie English of Hong-Kong (pidgin). How can a language that has no greater variety of sounds in it than the quack of a duck-raft or the cackle of a poultry-pen, and that is represented by twenty-six featureless characters, lead up to a literature that will delight the mind of a scholar? The social fellowship of which we get glimpses through coolie English does not tempt us. Of course your merchants go once or twice to a Chinese feast, where they taste trepang, shark's-fins and bird's-nest soup, and drink health and good-will with native business clients, by tossing

cups of samshoo into each other's open mouths, but that is for the fun of the thing, or to make their firms popular with Chinese customers.

Vice-Consul West.—Perhaps one of the reasons why foreigners are not attracted to Chinese society is that it represents one half of human life only. We never speak to your women and the children, and unless they appear upon the scene, there is a lack of piquancy and romance. Your countrymen are deficient in sentiment, and will probably continue so whilst men and women live so rigidly apart.

Pundit Tung.—It will be a long time before we shall change our family traditions. In the more important settlements there are clubs at which foreigners meet each other, and they seem to find men's company satisfying, for they spend much time together, even when their families are within easy reach. Perhaps they will by-and-by come over to our view about the separation of the sexes. The coarse manners of some of the foreigners do not incline us to make changes in our social life. Some of them at least have never learned the proprieties, and think themselves honest when they are only rude, and amusing when they are viciously familiar. Not many years ago one of our

Chinese ministers was returning with his retinue from Europe, and a merchant's clerk on board chucked the female attendant of His Excellency's wife under the chin, and called her "handsome facey." A Chinaman who would dare to offer such an insult to a waiting-maid here would be knived on the spot. When such things are rumoured abroad we ask, "Are Western manners like this?" Do not be surprised that we are jealous and inaccessible. We look upon it as contempt when foreigners are too indifferent to learn our speech and respect our customs, and it is only human nature to meet contempt with contempt.

Vice-Consul West.—But such looseness is against Western etiquette, no less. We have our code of manners, which is simple and spontaneous. Chinese ceremony is complex and elaborate in its requirements, and needs almost as much learning as the Chinese ideograph itself. Your people could learn our few rules of courtesy, and if they do not feel bound to practise the rules in their comings and goings amongst us, they might at least allow that we have our own proprieties of behaviour, and not rate us as unmannerly barbarians.

Pundit Tung.—Well, our rules are better,

particularly where women are concerned. It is forbidden us to touch a woman's hand, a restriction Mencius, of course, allows to be broken if a woman has stumbled into a well, and needs to be pulled out. But in foreign life women seem to be always in wells, judging by the constant need they have of being helped. Our distant manners make for domestic morality, and however bad we may be in some things, seductions, illegitimate births, and public divorces are fewer than with you. Foot-binding may be as wanting in pitifulness as you assert, yet we think it better than the promiscuous dancing of under-dressed women, which is practised at some of the Legations and Consulates, as well as in the merchants' "*hongs*."

Vice-Consul West.—But it is scarcely reasonable for us to give up social pleasures which involve no real evil, as a concession to Chinese prejudice. We are not missionaries who are under an obligation to deny themselves of everything through which they might forfeit the respect and good-will of their Chinese neighbours.

Pundit Tung.—Perhaps not, but it is the only price at which you can secure the secret

respect and good-will of the Chinese. If you prize codes of manners, objectionable from our standpoint but innocent from yours, more than friendship with our people, be it so. You cannot have it both ways. Our manners have helped our morals, and are consecrated by the authority of the sacred books, as well as by the usage of many dynasties. If your merchants come as the guests of our country, they should surely conform to our manners rather than expect us to copy theirs. When we go as guests into your territories, it is only fitting we should observe the etiquette of your houses. Our countrymen say a foreigner comes into our midst as though he were a manifestation of Yuk Wong Tai tai, and scholars, craftsmen and traders were a celestial host enlisted to bow down and serve him. The Son of Heaven himself could scarcely require more.

Vice-Consul West.—Perhaps we are a little overbearing, for we belong to a conquering race, but you greatly exaggerate the case. There is no racial antipathy on our side, theoretically at least. The antipathy on the part of your countrymen is ingrained rather than superficial, and shows itself towards those foreigners who adopt Chinese dress, and bend themselves to

native customs. And the Japanese, who are step-brothers in race and affiliated to the same Oriental stock, you dislike more even than the rest of us. That was so even before the war broke out, which of course added greatly to the exasperation.

Pundit Tung.—The Japanese at first belonged to the barbarians of the East, and although we half reformed them, they retained some of their earlier manners and customs, which we regard as licentious. Within the last few tens of years Japan, which was once our apprentice, has turned round, and wishes to be our instructor. It is not easy for us to resign ourselves to such an inverted relationship. The ancient and lowly tribute-bearer comes back to our Court a dictator.

Vice-Consul West.—It seems to me that you are impartial, and dislike all nationalities in much the same degree. And the dislike is rooted in ignorance.

Pundit Tung.—Perhaps the people as a whole put all foreign races into one vague group for hatred, but those of us who have been brought into contact with the outside world discriminate in the degree and quality of our disfavour. The Russians are more sociable

with us than the rest, but are more ruthless. They are the worst of enemies but the best of friends, and our feelings towards them are consequently a mixture of extremes. French suavity pleases us, but their politeness lacks dignity and reserve, and their policy at times threatens to overwhelm our country as remorselessly as the Yellow River. Perhaps they still make the fighting Emperor their pattern saint. We respect the Germans and their methods, for they believe in authority, like ourselves, and they keep women in their place. But they are rough. Americans treat us well, and have an affable ceremoniousness, but it is too hurried. Our returned emigrants like their ideas and their institutions, and those who have learned English in the Sunday-schools worship the young ladies who have taught them, and say that in spite of their easy manners they are as good as Kūn Yam or T'in Hau. England might stand first with us, if she would listen to our side of some of the questions in dispute, but her policy wavers with her statesmen, and is not so trustworthy as it once was. Perhaps we do not like any foreigners, but those who know admit that there are differences.

Vice-Consul West.—In every case special

explanations may doubtless be found, but there is a vague and historic dislike to everything un-Chinese. You have not always been at peace with your own subject tribes, and it is practically the same temper of suspicion and contempt which you allow to grow up towards all outsiders.

Pundit Tung.—That is perhaps because our nation is a huge family, for the sages taught that the nation rests upon the family, and its unity must be secured by the faithful cultivation of domestic sentiments. Large and firmly compacted families are usually jealous of the intrusion of strangers. I am told that in the extreme north of your country the clan still survives, and that when the clansmen go forth for purposes of trade and commerce, although they do not return to their villages at the Spring Festival to worship the ancestral graves, they dine together once a year. Those who do not belong to such clans are looked upon with coldness, and often feel lonesome and friendless. By naming regiments from the districts in which they are recruited, your Government perhaps desires to retrieve the errors of the past and to restore the clan. It is said that your Prime Minister is the head of a clan, and that he shows great

kindness to those of his own house, so that many in the Grand Council bear the same name, and are his kinsmen in different degrees. Clans resent any intrusion upon their privileges, pride themselves upon their superiority, look down upon unclanned folk as though they were tramps, and perhaps thieves, and scorn even clans of another surname. Suppose, for example, that your Prime Minister's clan, or the clan of the Minister of State for the Colonies, held together for two thousand years and multiplied in numbers exceedingly, it would perhaps look with disdain and misgiving upon the rest of the world. China is a huge clan, or cluster of clans, held together by ties the strength of which you do not duly estimate. Our clans quarrel amongst themselves, but they lose their sense of separateness and become one body when an outside stranger is to be dealt with. Clans do not brook interference with their domestic interests. And our clans are walled in by the protecting guilds of the towns and cities, and if the defence of the guilds is at fault, the secret societies, which are a bulwark against the oppression of our rulers, can always be used against invaders.

Vice-Consul West.—But the clan system is

not an unmixed good. I am not sure that its drawbacks do not outweigh its advantages. Clan jealousies breed many quarrels at home, and quarrels breed litigation, which always ends in impoverishment. Broader co-operation for the common good is all but impossible. Moreover, the clannish collectivism, which you say is the distinctive genius of the Chinese race, works mischievous effects by preventing international harmony. You need a larger idea of humanity, followed by a doctrine of free trade, which has done so much to strengthen and enrich our own race.

Pundit Tung.—By the idea of a larger humanity I think you perhaps mean the doctrine of Mak Tik, who taught that all men were to be loved alike, that the interests of clans and families were to be swallowed up in the common interest of all. Princes were not to arm their states against neighbouring states. But Mencius resisted his heresy, and it has never gained currency with our people. This doctrine of a large impartial humanity has never been exemplified in any form of Government under heaven. We have come as near in our own clannish way to the realisation of common happiness as western nations by their methods.

As to the doctrine of free trade, it is against our history and our institutions. *The Book of History* relates how three thousand years ago a present of hounds was sent to King Mō, of the Chau dynasty by one of the tribes of the West. The Grand Vizier remonstrated against the king's acceptance of such a present. "A prince should not value strange to the neglect of useful things if he wishes home industries to be perfected. He will not keep imported dogs and horses nor cherish in his kingdom fine birds and strange beasts. Foreigners will come to him when he does not look upon foreign things as precious, and his own immediate subjects will enjoy repose when he accounts moral worth of great price." Our political economy is still that of the Grand Vizier, not to speak of the policy which prevails in many of the great Governments of the West. The children and grandchildren in your own colonies have neither the doctrine of the larger humanity nor a true sense of continuous clanship, for they make tariffs against even their own fatherland, if the newspapers do not mislead us. If our type of clanship is suspicious of outsiders, it safeguards our interests, at least as the wisdom of the ancients judged things.

Vice-Consul West.—But this obstinate and suspicious clannishness is often suicidal. To illustrate its action on a small scale, take the attitude of some of your countrymen towards medical missionaries. You admit that they have many things to teach your countrymen. Not a few Chinamen who ridicule tracts, preaching, and mission-schools, praise the work of the doctors because the benefits are so obvious. Foreigners even who do not believe in missionary religion subscribe to the local hospitals with great liberality and cheerfulness. And yet if one class of foreigners is more cruelly libelled than another, it is that of the missionary doctors. You know the monstrous stories which are sometimes circulated to stir up anger against them. To suppress their work would be to give a new license to the ravages of disease and death.

Pundit Tung.—They are misrepresented because they are the pilot crows leading on the flock. Foreigners of all sorts soon follow this advance-guard and disturb our country. When it is said they make medicine of children's eyes and brains it must be remembered that our own books of medicine speak of effectual remedies to be found in the secretions of human and other bodies, so these unpleasant fictions

seem to the ignorant as though they might be true. Magic and medicine are mixed up in our ideas. It is quite possible, too, that our own doctors, who are discredited and made angry by these new methods, have something to do with this particular phase of the anti-foreign movement.

Vice-Consul West.—You will scarcely defend that malignant form of trade protection. It is against filial piety, for it is against the health and prolonged life of a great many fathers and mothers. It seems as though you can surrender your prejudices against the West when no particular interests are threatened. Marco Polo was treated as though he were one of the minor gods by the founder of the Ming dynasty, and the Jesuit scholars received much honour and kindness from the early sovereigns of the Great Pure dynasty, and before the days of treaties many wandering traders came to your shores, and were unmolested.

Pundit Tung.—The earlier visitors conformed to our customs, and did not try to set aside our etiquette, which is a part of our religion, and in many ways they served both the emperor and his people. Everybody loathes the snake and flees from it, because it is an image of

what is odious and fatal. But farmers cherish snakes because they destroy the rats which devour grain, and find a place for them in their farm buildings. And when Marco Polo acted as page and steward to Kublai Khan, and the Jesuits revised our calendar, translated Western mathematics, and cast astronomical instruments for our Observatory, we conquered our first repugnance and nurtured them at Court. But because a farmer pets a harmless snake and keeps it in his granary or ox-shed, that does not prove the common Chinaman has conquered his loathing. Not that I would compare your honoured countrymen to reptiles. The illustration is unhappy, but it shows a rule and its exceptions. It must be added, however, that within the last three or four reigns foreigners have forced themselves upon us, and are here in virtue of treaties which were either wrested by war or have been conceded from fear of renewed war. We shall always recoil from relations into which we have been driven, and which cross instincts that are possibly clannish in their origin.

Vice-Consul West.—But you cannot imagine that at the present time it would be possible to dispense with treaties and conduct our inter-

course without the guarantees of such instruments. Then, indeed, would the Boxer programme prevail, and all foreigners be driven into the sea.

Pundit Tung.—If treaties were swept away, perhaps one Chinaman in ten would wish to have dealings with foreigners, one in ten would be bitterly opposed to any such dealings, and the other eight would be neutral, as the question would have no practical relevance for them. At any rate, foreign statesmen should not be surprised if we fail to enter with any great degree of good-will into relations which have been thrust upon us. Chinese maidens, as you know, are betrothed without their consent or approval, and in many cases they fight against being sent away into strange clans and wedded to youths they have never seen. To escape compulsory marriage violent resistance is sometimes offered when the bridal chair is brought to the door, and cases of suicide are not unknown. Some of the marriages are better than might have been expected, and some are fateful of misery and misfortune. After a time these forced relations with Western countries may turn out better than we venture to think, but at the beginning you cannot surely dream that

our country is enamoured of them. An international fellowship is thrust upon us which offends our pride, and from which we instinctively recoil. Although things may work all right in the end, the beginning is a time of fear, dismay, and resentment.

Vice-Consul West.—Perhaps you are not so ill off, after all. In our country bride and bridegroom choose each other, and marriage is by free consent on both sides. And yet some of my married friends tell me they think as much happiness arises out of Chinese modes of marriage as out of Western modes. Free commercial and intellectual intercourse without the constraint and guarantee of treaties, might turn out better than the contact with Western life which has been forced upon you by soldiers and diplomatists, or it might not. Your countrymen ought to take to themselves this consolation, that it is the Chinese and not the English or American principle of marriage which has prevailed in the clash and contact of Oriental and Western life.

CHAPTER II

RIVAL SYSTEMS OF EDUCATION

“ Practising old knowledge so as to acquire new, fits a man to be a teacher of others.”—CONFUCIUS.

Dr Li T'ō.—I am unworthy of the honour you pay me in this complimentary call. Please be seated on the divan. Scholars are always glad to meet scholars, whether their honours have been gained in the Middle Kingdom or in the colleges of the West. I ought to have been the first to call and welcome you. Do not blame the rudeness of my omission; I had sickness in my home at the time. I have heard that you are to direct the High School established by the missionaries, where astronomy, mathematics, chemistry, the foreign tongues, and many other things are to be taught. The Imperial Government has already established such schools, and some of the officials are sending their sons to be trained under the new system.

Professor Jones.—Thank you for your pleasant words. It is hopeful to see the signs of an intellectual awakening in the chief cities of the empire. A new epoch needs new methods of training, and China must not fall behind the other nations in the paths of progress. There is no reason why your race should not be as pre-eminent in modern as in ancient learning.

Dr Li T'ō.—The new methods, it is to be hoped, will not lower the literary prestige of our country. My degree of "tsun sz" is but poor, and yet I did not take it till I was past forty, although I had been diligently studying from childhood under the best of tutors. I should not like my poor useless sons to fall below their father's standard, although I do not see how it can be avoided if their time is taken up with other studies, and they spend no more time on the Classical Text and the Commentaries than the children of peasants and artisans.

Professor Jones.—The old methods of education fail to produce the man demanded by the emergencies of the times, and not a few of your countrymen are at last admitting the fact. To memorise old-world aphorisms and write essays according to a pattern that has never varied for tens of generations does not develop the

capabilities of the mind, and will do little for the improvement of the country. Confucius said: "Learning without reflection is labour lost, and reflection without learning is perilous." In your schools and examination halls you have the maximum of learning with the minimum of reflection, if you will pardon the bluntness of the criticism. He also said: "The man of complete excellence is no mere vessel," meaning, I assume, that he could adapt himself to every kind of task, and was not rigidly shaped for one use only. Your system turns out elegant and costly vessels, but a more varied scheme of education would yield men of wider capabilities who would do the work for which the hour waits.

Dr Li T'ō.—Perhaps we inherit the spirit of a certain disciple of the sage who, when "he had heard one thing and had not yet put it into practice, was only afraid lest he should hear something else." The text-books of our schools contain all that is necessary for a refined and well-regulated social life. Things might be better with us if we were more thoroughly permeated with the precepts taught in our sacred books and embodied in our traditional rites.

Professor Jones.—I am afraid I have not

made my meaning clear. The new education does not seek to subvert those elementary rules of conduct, which you assume are the special discovery of the Confucianists, but which, as a matter of fact, are current amongst all races. Every civilisation admits of improvement, and the improvement depends upon the acquisition of new knowledge. When the growth of a child is arrested it is due to defective nutrition, and when invention, discovery, and progress in the art of living cease, it is because the supply of fresh ideas is cut off; and then decay must sooner or later ensue. The higher civilisation you need must be sought through a broader and more comprehensive system of education. Confucius himself had an enquiring mind, was an adept in picking up information, and had he been living to-day, would have shown himself foremost in reform. It speaks well for the future of China that in the capital of the empire, as well as in many provincial cities, universities are being founded for the promotion of Western knowledge, both by the missionaries and by even the representatives of the Imperial Government.

Dr Li T'ō.—Well, the Reformers must not go too fast, for our country, in city and village alike, is governed by the ideas of men well on

to seventy. Changes are easy to make where the aged are treated with less veneration than amongst us. The day of the Four Books and the Five King is not yet past, nor soon will be. Science, which is akin to the strange things from which the Master shrank, is less esteemed by our ruling classes than letters. The Chinamen instructed in medicine, chemistry, engineering, and foreign languages are looked down upon by our graduates, just as your merchants who have gathered wealth. Your inventors and mechanics are not greatly revered, it is said, by the hereditary dukes and barons of the Court. In our Civil Service they may sometimes fill inferior positions, as interpreters and assistant magistrates, and may be even sent as ministers to the countries of the West, but, as a rule, they rank with military mandarins who have been promoted for bodily strength rather than for learning. The new movement is momentary, and the scholars will have their turn of influence and good fortune again.

Professor Jones.—But, as a practical man, do you not see that the different parts of your educational system are disproportionate and ill-balanced? The acquisition of countless complicated ideographs takes up all the years of youth

and of early manhood, and in fact the goal is never reached. It is as though a musician spent the greater part of his life in studying the woods of which harpsichords should be made, and the patterns according to which the ancients fashioned them, and then should venture to play only in the last few years of his life, after his fingers had become stiff and his ear had lost its first truth and keenness. You spend strength on the accidents of learning and reach an intellectual life only when the mind has lost its vigour. Our children have mastered the script of their language, and are entering upon a life of reason and understanding, years before your students have attained the skill in penmanship after which they aspire. The knowledge imparted in your schools is of a limited number of books only, to which no fresh additions are ever made. Your method of education makes scholars who are polished copyists of the ancients, and suppresses individuality. A great literature should represent every variety of mind. And, if you will allow me to say so, *The Book of Changes*, which you honour as much as *The Book of History* and *The Book of Odes*, is the fountain-head of such superstitions as astrology and fortune-telling, which lead many people

astray. You can have no true science whilst books of this class are held in honour.

Dr Li T'ō.—We are not anxious to develop what you understand by individuality, for it is an awkward and sometimes a dangerous quality, and is often hurtful to the principle of veneration. Those who are disobedient to the aged and slight their forefathers, delight to cover up their evil dispositions by assuming superior and fantastic wisdom. The Chinese thinkers you account distinguished for their individuality have not been admitted to the ranks of our great writers. And our literature does bear fruit, although it does not go on making fresh wood, a peculiarity which is sometimes mistaken for fruitfulness. The fruit it bears is fourfold. It softens manners. It refines the taste, making every well-read Chinaman an adept in style. It consecrates wholesome precedents, building up boys in virtue more directly than the Classics of the Greeks and Romans, which you still imitate as slavishly as we copy our own early models. I have heard your education is admittedly weak on this point. And after the first drudgery is past our standard books minister the same kind of pleasure to us as music and painting minister to the people of

the West. Tastes differ or are satisfied in various ways, for your music and painting have little or no charm for us. And as to what you call the false science in *The Book of Changes*, it is said that many of the people of the West are coming back to the practice of astrology and fortune-telling.

Professor Jones.—On this last point let me give you an illustration of what I mean. The other day I was talking with a highly-educated native friend upon the subject of foreign astronomy, and he tried to prove to me that the earth was fixed and the sun circled round it, because the earth, according to the cosmogony of the Chinese, is feminine in its quality, and the feminine is identified with restfulness, while the sun is masculine in principle, and what is masculine must be active. You will be incapable of conceiving what true science is, till these loud-sounding but fallacious assumptions are cast out of the Chinese mind, and, if necessary, out of Chinese literature.

Dr Li T'ō.—But I have read that the astronomers of the West were once censured and punished for saying it was the earth that went round the sun, because that was against the teaching of your sacred books, and those

books are still esteemed. If your sacred books have not been cast aside because they were once supposed to be inconsistent with the teaching of the astronomers, it is possible our sacred books also may still continue to be held in honour.

Professor Jones.—But you certainly need to have a new motive-force brought into your lives. Your literature, excellent of its kind, lacks something, for it leaves your country on the same dead-level century after century. Your institutions and your methods of government, admirable in some respects, are not perfect, for the society they mould is not moving towards higher and better standards of life and well-being. The progress which is the rule for races and empires, in our half of the world at least, must begin amongst you with an improvement in the system of education.

Dr Li T'ō.—But if we keep at the same level we do it century after century, without any sign of decadence. Friends who have lived in Western countries, and have watched the trend of affairs there, affirm that after a few generations of progress decay sets in, and the empires of Europe tend one by one to fall back from their former glory into insignificance. We at

least maintain our ground, and serene stability is better than fitful outward progress attended with risks of decline. And are not our Classics praised by scholars from the West who have studied and translated them into foreign tongues? Our taste for the savour of our own literature is the result of continuous training, like the eye for the colour of our porcelain or the form of our wrought jade. And although the books of the foreigners contain some things that are useful, some things that are strange, and some things that may perhaps be true, the form is rough, and gives us no pleasure. When Western science is set forth in Chinese book-style, the names are uncouth and meaningless, and the sentences grind and creak like ox-carts or wheel-barrows passing over the uneven roads of the northern plains, whilst ours glide like a fleet of boats sailing across the lake in the moonlight. Perhaps our country would be more open to new ideas if you did not threaten us with a revolution in which the Classics will disappear. When you disparage our literature, or hint that it must make way for a literature you bring in your ships, as you bring opium and long-cloths, every Chinese scholar feels as much injured as though you were trying to take something from

his personal possessions and the possessions of his scholared ancestry. We prize our literary honours as much as you prize your wealth, and cherish the memory of such attainments for generations.

Professor Jones.—But we have no wish to discredit your literature or to give any support to the idea that it must pass into oblivion. We think it hurtful that one branch of knowledge only should engage the entire attention of the Chinese people. Changes are sooner or later inevitable, and it is to be hoped those changes will be brought about in peaceful ways. The changes, when they come to pass, will make for the good of the country in which your children and your children's children must dwell, and surely you are a lover of your country, and wish to see its peoples wise, strong, and prosperous. Posterity must be considered as well as ancestry. We shall belong to the ancestry some day, and must not forfeit our claim upon the gratitude of those who will come after us by resisting movements, the fruit of which will add happiness to their lot.

Dr Li Tō.—But are all your changes accomplished in a day, and do your experiments in Government never need to be

reversed? It is rumoured that in the hospitals of Europe doctors try experiments upon the poor which would not be allowed when they are treating patients who pay them large fees. It seems to me, "the stupid one," that Western teachers want to try upon our Government and peoples experiments they cannot entirely carry out at home. In the colleges of learning, which abound in your honourable country, it is said that Greek plays and Latin essays are taught, whilst the sciences are only admitted into the appointed courses of study a little at a time, and missionaries have often said that our ancient Classics are as good or even better than the Classics to which your scholars attach so much importance. The moral tone, moreover, is purer and more helpful to virtue. In the subjects of examination prescribed for your doctors, lawyers, magistrates, consuls, judges, these old-world letters are still accounted necessary. Why should you wish to try upon us novelties in education that you have not entirely carried out in your own country? You are scarcely in accord with the Master's description of the princely man who "acts before he speaks, and afterwards speaks according to his actions." Your partiality in trying new methods

of education upon us brings to mind a story told in *The History of Foreign Medicine* about the first use of the antidote to smallpox. The doctor was allowed to implant the lymph in the blood of men already sentenced to death by the judges. If they died through the disease caused by the experiment, it would be no worse than death by the hand of the executioner in presence of the crowd; and if the remedy succeeded, they were to be rewarded with freedom for the rest of their lives. If China survives the experiment, good luck to everybody concerned and congratulations all round, and, if she does not survive, no great harm will be done, as you judge things, for you speak of the empire as sick, and are not sure but that Fate has already decreed her death. But China has done nothing deserving death, and she is not likely to end her course for many a century to come.

Professor Jones.—We take no such mournful view of China, although some foreign newspapers have recklessly spoken of her as the Sick Man of the Far East. We are sure that fortunate after-days are in store for China, and do not mistrust the issue of these measures of improvement we advocate. In making the education of our own fatherland more purely scientific, we

have the prejudice of old scholars to overcome, and the classical traditions of education, which are a growth of centuries, cannot be abolished in a day.

Dr Li T'ō.—The lesson might be remembered when you propose to lay violent hands on the schools, colleges, and examination halls of our empire. The prejudice confronting reformers in China is of more ancient growth, and shared by a larger number of people. Our country takes a much longer time to turn round. If you cannot train a parrot to turn a somersault on the swaying ring in its cage in a day, how can you expect the ostrich or the phoenix to learn the trick before the sun is twenty feet up in the sky?

Professor Jones.—Of course we allow for all that, and do not intend to run counter to the traditions of past scholarship. The difference between the two cases is this, that to attain a competent knowledge of the Chinese books takes more time and strength than to attain the proficiency in Latin or Greek required for a university degree. European lads do not spend themselves for ten or fifteen years on three or four classical poets and historians only.

Dr Li T'ō.—Perhaps if you would offer us

what has been strictly verified in Western knowledge, the philosophy of the sages would not be so hopelessly crowded out as you assume. As far as the evidence will take us, we are docile to your leading, in some things. Your surgery we praise, for its feats have been practised in our midst, and with one consent we confess its frequent efficacy. But your physicians admit that they do not know everything about the action of drugs, and trust more and more to commonplace rules for the preservation or the recovery of health. Much of your knowledge, unlike that of our Classics, fluctuates, for it is only half proven, and passes through many phases and fashions. Mechanical progress is now spoken of by some of your writers as hurtful to human skill, and your taste for the moment seem to oscillate between machinery and handicrafts. Those who wish to reform your education are beginning to advocate the more thorough training of the hands and the feet, in which things we are adepts. You may have to apply to us for competent instructors. Home industries are winning back into favour once more. If the process goes on, a point may come in the turning of the wheel when we shall be at the top again, for it is said that no

Europeans can use their hands and feet so deftly as our weavers, carpenters, and wood-carvers. Your civilisation is on its trial, whilst ours is established and approved. It may need here and there a new loop or clasp, but we are not likely to turn it inside out, much less to throw it away, as you desire. Perhaps you preach up the new civilisation, for which Western schools and colleges are to prepare, because you possess many of the materials out of which the new civilisation is to be constructed, and are anxious that we should become your customers.

Professor Jones.—Believe me, those of us who wish to encourage better methods of education are not in a country, the climate of which is so hurtful to us as that of China, to further the interests of our home manufacturers, or to plead, however indirectly, the cause of merchants who wish to create markets and to sell their wares. We desire to improve the life of the people, and have no other wish than to see China strong and flourishing.

Dr Li Tō.—But education that puts men into the way of getting riches and awakens no sense of pleasure in the mind we look upon as a high-sounding name only. You know ho

Ngān Ui loved learning and lived a happy life, although he was housed in a hovel, had a gourd for a bowl, a bamboo-joint for a drinking-cup, and rice and water for his daily food. He stood first in the affection of Confucius. Does your learning bring the same sweet content under poverty-stricken conditions of life? I am told that even in your colleges such gymnastics as are practised by our candidates for military office are of more account than books. As to the merchants who come to sojourn in China, they have zeal for training racing ponies but not for the cultivation of literature. Few of them are able to learn our language, and they require the Chinamen who act as their servants, clerks, and salesmen to learn foreign speech so that converse may be possible. This defect in the training of your countrymen not only compels those who are engaged in commerce to remain ignorant of many things which it is their interest to know, but makes cordial and intelligent friendship impossible. It is not easy to be sociable with those who are compelled to convey much of their meaning by the gestures of the dumb.

Professor Jones.—I am afraid that is because our merchants grow languid in the heat of the

summer, and hope to make rapid fortunes which will enable them to go back to their friends. When money is no longer gathered up so quickly as in former years, perhaps they will be compelled to learn the Chinese speech and take interest in the customs and past history of the people.

Dr Li T'ō.—But surely you are not coming round to confess that many of your countrymen only love learning for the gain of which it brings the promise, and not for the pure pleasure it ministers. The Analects speak of the inexhaustible delights of learning, and in every generation millions of scholars prove that those delights do not easily pall. Can it be that our learning is like a beautiful maiden whose fame is widely diffused, and whom hundreds would gladly espouse, and that your learning is plain, dull, and ill-favoured, and no one desires the hand that is offered?

Professor Jones.—But our advanced scholars delight in letters and adore books as fervently as the most diligent and enthusiastic students of the Chinese. Many of them revel also in the beauties of style.

Dr Li T'ō.—But the fact that the supply of books exceeds the demand looks as though

your special methods of education did not create a genuine and disinterested love of literature. Is it true, as we are told, that more books are composed in your country than are printed, and that of the many books printed, only a small proportion are bought by the public? Is it true, also, that poetry is out of the fashion, and that a few men and women only write it now to please themselves? It has even been said that many accounted your greatest writers produce nothing but plays and small stories; and Western sinologues have even expressed surprise that literature of this inferior order should not be found in our libraries, but should be sold for a few cash only by the street side.

Professor Jones.—But if more books are produced than come into use, the inference is clear that our methods of education stir up men and women to think. As to the poets, perhaps they have had their day on both sides of the world. Your scholars indite verses on fans and dash off rhyming couplets for the scrolls of reception halls; but these ingenious compositions are only read by those to whom they are addressed, and by the friends who are willing to echo the self-praise implied in dis-

playing these testimonials. The market for original poetry is as flat in China as in the countries of the West, and in that matter at least we are quits. We are digesting new knowledge at present, which has come to us in unexpected lumps, and by-and-by we shall come back to elegant literature.

Dr Li T'ō.—In that case we may well wait till the stage of assimilation is passed, and you are in the mood to prize the special charms of our literature. Chinese fashions do not change, and if we are patient for a few years more, we shall be in the van of culture again, and, after many a round-about itinerary, you will have caught up with us. We like to be at the goal without a struggle. Our scholars will always depreciate your knowledge whilst you speak slightly of ours.

CHAPTER III

WESTERN *versus* CHINESE DEMOCRACIES

“Heaven sees as my people see, and hears as my people hear.”—SHU KING.

Sō I Shuk.—So you come from the powerful country of the Flowery Flag (America). China has never been at war with America, and barring a few riots, our traders and labourers have been well done by, whilst sojourning in your cities. As an elder of the village, I welcome you to our mean family temple. The entertainment, I fear, has been coarse, and our viands unworthy of so distinguished a guest. Foreigners are rich, and live on dainty fare, whilst our village of beggars has little but half-hulled rice and yams to offer its guests.

Ezra T. Nye.—Your hospitality has been most bountiful, and a viceroy could not have dined to better effect than your lowly brother from the Republic of the West. The only thing that could have been improved is my use

of the chop sticks. In this journey through the hill country, everybody has been attentive, including the district magistrate himself; and excepting, of course, the shouts of the street boys, I have had nothing to grumble at, and they mean no evil.

Sō I Shuk.—Our country is poor and ill-supplied with schools, so the boys grow up rude and unversed in manners. Do not blame them, for it is only village ignorance.

Ezra T. Nye.—Not at all. Boys are the same everywhere, and in my country we let them have their bout of noise and frolic unchecked. They grow quiet and sober in due time. Perhaps our boys are a little worse than yours, because they catch the spirit of independence from their elders. We pay little or no respect to rank, and the highest officers of the Government are taught to regard themselves as the servants of the people. Class feuds become less bitter when ministers of State, judges, and magistrates have to come to the community at large for their mandate.

Sō I Shuk.—But the power of our rulers rests upon the will of the people. In conversation with the King of Tsai, Mencius affirmed that a man who put an unrighteous ruler to

death was not a regicide but a minister of justice. He also said that officials must be promoted, removed from power, or put to death, not at the prompting of courtiers or fellow-officials, but by the will of the common people. Thus is it that the old saying is justified—"The people of the kingdom put him to death." In some countries, I am told, the people believe in the Divine right of kings, and imagine that the right is the right of birth. We also believe in Divine rights, and speak of our ruler as the Son of Heaven, but his right is derived, if the teaching of our sages is to be accepted, from the will of the people.

Ezra T. Nye.—These theories are just and sagacious, but you need revolution and bloodshed to put them into effect. The weakness of your constitution is that you have no arrangements for carrying the will of the people into effect. Amongst us the people choose a new head of the State once in four years, and a great many of the subordinate officials are changed at the same time.

Sō I Shuk.—But that seems changing from the mere love of novelty, not because the cause of righteousness or the welfare of the people requires it. It is scarcely necessary to pull the

house down so often for the purpose of giving effect to the judgment of the populace.

Ezra T. Nye.—The change is not so serious as your metaphor implies, for the constitution still stands. We simply change a few of the servants in the house, if it is thought fit, or allow them to renew their agreement with the masters for another term of years. It is only in our country that the doctrine of the sovereignty of the people is carried out without fear or favour to its just conclusion. Russia is in as bad, or worse, condition than China, and the working and trading classes have no rights as subjects and citizens. In Germany, there is a little liberty qualified by the power of the police and the soldiers. In France, there is a great deal of nominal liberty qualified by the heads of the army, who are themselves ruled by the priests ; and in England there is almost as much liberty as with us, but the people are not allowed to elect their judges and sovereign, and the politicians persuade the people to entrust them with unlimited power, the financial houses of London in the meantime instructing the politicians. We are free in all things, and the highest people in our country are subject to public opinion. I do not know what I might

be tempted to do, if I had been born a Russian or even a Chinaman. We do not believe in the hereditary principle, for it allows a man, who may happen to be fool or rogue, or both combined, to succeed to the prestige, power, and office of his father. Indeed some of our rich men in private life are beginning to see it is not wise to leave very much of their money to their sons, because it beguiles them into vice and wastefulness.

Sō I Shuk.—Perhaps we are less bound by the rule of hereditary succession than some of the nations of the west. Leaving a few groups of Mantchoo princes out of the reckoning, no office is hereditary, and the law of primogeniture is subject to modification in both the Imperial Court and the village clan. If a youth grows up unworthy, and continues so till those who decide his family affairs are about to pass away, he is put where he can do no harm. He will be kept out of the ranks of fathers and uncles who control the affairs of the younger generation. The emperor is not compelled to designate his oldest son to the succession, and it is one of the gains of polygamy that the choice of the heir is not commonly limited. Your countrymen are often

heard praising the uses of competition, and our customs encourage a pleasing rivalry within the home in wisdom and virtue. In those Western countries, where thrones are still rigidly hereditary, I have heard it said that unless a queen is the chief ruler, it is difficult to have a court frequented by those who live without stain of reproach. We have developed beyond that stage. If the absolute power of the father has been maintained amongst us from primitive times, it protects us against many worse evils.

Ezra T. Nye.—Sometimes it does, and sometimes it does not. In this home of your ancestors I would not say anything disrespectful to the heads of communities, but not infrequently usurpers have traded upon the power and privilege of age, and have set aside rulers wiser and more disinterested than themselves.

Sō I Shuk (wagging his outspread palm in deprecation).—Do not speak thus. We have no consuls to protect us, and it might be unlucky to venture upon such a perilous topic. As a rule, the old choose more wisely than the young, and whilst the uses of divination must not be overlooked, the end aimed at is to judge men's dispositions correctly, and then appoint or set aside. Our methods have worked well

and given us a solid corporate life possessed by no other race.

Ezra T. Nye.—But the system has not worked well, does not work well, and never will. Only the other day I was reading with my teacher the quaint ballad on “big rats amongst the millet and the wheat,” to which the poet compared the extortioners of his time. And that ballad, I believe, was written in the Golden Age three thousand years ago.

Sō I Shuk.—I have not yet heard of the kind of Government which will give security against rats. Wherever there are harvests there will be rats, more or less.

Ezra T. Nye.—Yes, but with the present order of ideas in China, rats are held as sacred as the pigs and fish in the Buddhist monastery visited in the course of my journey. You revere the extortioners as if they were half divine, and allow them to multiply into a national plague.

Sō I Shuk.—But they do not eat everything, and some of us get fat on what they leave us. You surely would not have us devastate our rice-fields for the sake of starving out the rats. It is hard enough when Heaven sends famines, and we do not need to add to the score.

Ezra T. Nye.—That brings me back to

what I was just saying, you have no arrangements in your constitution for ridding yourselves of oppressors. You can only do it by a revolution which entails loss of life. There are no popular elections, and you cannot hope to influence the policy of the Government, unless by acts of violence the Government will regard as capital crimes. You must surely resent the habit your officials have of treating you as though you were babies, and sometimes grossly ill-treating you. The patriarchal tradition may be carried too far, although I allow it is an interesting and oft-times beautiful survival.

Sō I Shuk.—But I think we get as much of our way, which is what you mean by liberty, as the people of Western States. Friends who have been abroad tell me they felt all the time as though they were in cages, and scarcely dared move a finger lest they should break some strange law, and be marched off by the police to the guard-house. They never felt they were out of the cage till they had set foot again in their own province. As to our mandarins, we are not so much at their mercy as you think. I was in business for twenty years in the capital of the province, and we twice secured the removal of district magistrates who

oppressed the people and issued vexatious and unpopular proclamations. And in the villages, if we pay the land-tax and settle our own quarrels, the mandarins rarely trouble us.

Ezra T. Nye.—But the right to choose your rulers is not provided for in the statute book of the Great Pure dynasty, and riots and shutting up shops and the petitioning of the Trade Guilds, do not afford you an opportunity of selecting the best men for power. When you have dislodged one oppressor, a man of more tiger-like temper may be sent to take his place.

Sō I Shuk.—That is not likely, because the Viceroy of the province usually knows we have to be put into good temper again, and advises accordingly. But all mandarins are pretty much alike to us if they do not screen law-breakers or levy undue taxes. As a matter of fact, they have little to do with the villages where our life centres, and most of us are only sojourners in the towns and cities, and do not trouble ourselves about the mandarins. As Confucius said, "He who is not in an office does not concern himself with the duties of its administration." As far as I can hear, we have more control over the things which directly affect our welfare than

Western peoples. If some reports are to be believed, you have the name of self-government without the fact. An election day is appointed, and neighbours pledge each other in strong drink, and shout as if they were playing "*moira*," put flags out of their houses, wear coloured ribbons, and each voter thinks, unhappy madman ! that he is emperor for an hour, ruling the destinies of the world. But the voter feels like putting on mourning next day, when he has to enter upon his old life, and perhaps be overridden for a number of years by the man he has chosen. A scholar in the next village, who was called home from one of the European embassies to wait upon a dying father, says, The idea the people have away there that they govern themselves is false, and they only think it because they are superficial and illiterate. For many important reforms, both cities and villages have been earnestly asking, and after two or three tens of years are no nearer the accomplishment of their wishes than ever. Before an election is to take place, the members of the Grand Council meet in secret, and decide what cries they will raise to divert the people from their schemes ; and then when the Assembly of Law-Makers has been once elected, the chiefs of the

parties do what they like for five or six years, and cater for the interests of their friends. Our oppressors go on till their heads fall, and yours till the next period for forming a new parliament; the tenure of power working out upon an average to the same term of time. Perhaps our system has advantages over any of the systems of Europe, because there an oppressor can trick the plain unthinking people a second time, and get back into office, whilst officials dealt with by our method, if they come back upon the scene by any one of the six paths of transmigration, reappear as pigs or peacocks, and not as the wearers of peacock-feathers. You choose sides, but can take no part in the game. In China, every man may hope to take his part in the game, as I will explain in a moment. The newspapers make a great show of criticising the two sides in the game, but they have not the weight or the disinterestedness of our official censors, because newspaper publication is a branch of trade, being conducted only for gain. At least, such are the customs of Europe, according to what is rumoured amongst us. Perhaps in your country things are otherwise, and the people get their wishes carried into effect. When living in the capital of the

province I often observed that American Consuls were more deferential to the subjects of the country they represented than English Consuls. Although you look upon us as though we were the slaves of the dynasty, we have more influence and liberty than foreigners. The wishes of an old man are respected as though he were the emperor himself. In towns and cities we have the right to govern, employing our own police, lighting and paving our own streets, building whatever temples we choose, putting up whatever wharves and bridges we need, without asking permission from our rulers. It is said that in Western countries it costs as much money to get the consent of the Government for public works as to carry out the works themselves. In our villages every kind of custom prevails, if so be no injury is done to virtue, and we can endow what religions we think well, and choose our own counsellors. Each village is a commune, and does not as a rule interfere with distant villages. In the rural districts the grey-beards have all the state and honour of mandarins, who rarely intrude upon the neighbourhood ; and it is a much sweeter thing to be honoured by one's own kindred than to receive outward honour, like the mandarins, from

strangers. The Chinese have been accustomed to greater liberty of action than foreigners. It is a complaint against them that when they go to other countries they secretly manage their own affairs, and only now and again appeal to the judges and magistrates. Those who have returned from Western lands say that although the officials there do not receive bribes, they are far from pleased, because our countrymen are in the habit of settling so many things amongst themselves. A Chinaman feels that he is a free man at home, and one to be taken account of, whilst in the countries of the West it seems as though somebody were always trying to take away his liberty and make him a slave.

Esra T. Nye.—I am glad to hear you admit that the officials of Christian countries do not make a practice of receiving bribes. It is to be feared that things are different here. In every part of Asia the “squeeze pidgin” is as wide-spread and as inevitable as malaria itself. Although your system of open examinations for honour and preferment is fine in theory, and poor scholars entering them sometimes become prefects, viceroys, and grand secretaries, yet office is bought and sold under the very eye of the Literary Chancellor himself. Do not the

rich illiterates smuggle poor graduates into the hall as cooks and coolies? and these disguised graduates write essays that get placed at the top of the list. And many qualify through the examinations who never gain emoluments. And when at last a post of administration is reached, the mandarin of course is expected to recoup himself for his outlay of money whilst taking the steps which precede an appointment. Moreover, your Government, when wanting money, openly sells rank without the slightest attempt at disguise.

Sō I Shuk.—But I have heard it said that in England judges and Court poets and the chief priests of the Church are appointed because of the service they have rendered to the political faction which is in office; and that in the clubs and guild-houses of London titles may be bought at a fixed tariff. If a man subscribes thousands of taels to the funds of his political friends, the Prime Minister recommends the sovereign to give him a patent of nobility. Even in your honourable country, it is said that all public appointments are vacated by an election of the President, who gives them to his own friends and supporters. Money is extorted from the criminal classes and shared

with the ruling gentry of the city. That is probably, however, the slander of our ignorant and ill-disposed countrymen who have been there as cooks on steamers, or to wash clothes. Our village headmen, who have more power than your fifth and sixth button magistrates, are chosen by their own clansmen, and, although they may sometimes think it prudent to pay the bribes asked by bad magistrates, never receive bribes from their own clansmen, and their decisions are worthy of their years and virtue. The sentiments and affections pervading the family groups dwelling together in our villages may sometimes make the elders partial, but they save justice from degenerating into sordidness and oppression. Indulgent to our kinsmen we may be, yet we keep down crime and prevent the intrusion of the mandarins. Only last winter we exercised our power as criminal judges by drowning in the village fish-pond there a grand-nephew, who was a hopeless opium sot, and who had been practising frauds that might have involved the village. The father of the young man was at last led to consent when he saw that he himself might be held responsible for the felonies of his son. He had another son to continue

the ancestral offerings. That is how we maintain our independence and keep free of the mandarins.

Ezra T. Nye.—But we have no such dread of our judges and magistrates. They are trained for their work, and dare not deviate from the strict interpretation of the law. The proceedings of the Courts are reported in the press, and any grave miscarriage of justice would be brought to light. And those who fill these posts are upright, and are paid enough to put them beyond the temptation to be avaricious. Neither are they expected to provide for scores of fellow-clansmen. The system of keeping groups of cognate families tied together in the same districts is in some ways good, but the fact that a man should have a crowd of blood relations acting as his suite and body-guard when he is in office, and that he should feel himself under compulsion to distribute gifts from time to time amongst those for whom no posts can be found, is almost sure to make the administration sordid. For a generation past scarcely a case has occurred of a foreign judge or magistrate accepting the gifts of litigants. You have doubtless heard your fellow-countrymen who have returned from Australia, the

Pacific Coast, or the Straits Settlements, praise the impartiality of the Courts. A Chinese labourer can get his rights against the richest of the foreign merchants.

Sō I Shuk.—Yes, yes. They all say the magistrates are clean-handed and austere, sometimes giving judgment even against their own countrymen; for the sense of blood relationship is not so strong as with us. Yet these traders who have come back to their native places tell me they would sooner have blemished justice from men who are their own kinsmen than well-balanced decisions from men who are cold and distant, and who do not understand their manners and speech. The village elders who hold no formal seal of office judge misdemeanours which arise within the clan. When domestic or village crime has to be punished, we rarely allow the duty to be shirked. It is in this way we avoid the interposition of mandarins born and bred in other provinces, for when they handle a dispute impoverishment and shame are sure to follow. Confucius, when in office, tried to discourage litigation. Our mandarins succeed in doing the same thing, although in different ways and with less noble motives. They form what in the Colony of Hong-Kong

you call a Court of Appeal, although the factions in our villages have usually too much sense to carry their quarrels to the cities for settlement. If the administration of justice in the cities is not always good, it matters little to law-abiding people. Perhaps we do some things Jesus commended better than His disciples, for in nine cases out of ten we agree with our adversary quickly in the way, or, to be more exact, our elders arbitrate and save the face of both sides. Your rulers, I think, do not always allow you to do this. I have read about various countries and their governments, as well as reports of law-suits at Hong-Kong and Shanghai, printed in the native press, and as far as I can understand, foreigners have less liberty and scantier rights of self-government than we possess.

Ezra T. Nye.—But your quiet and law-abiding classes do not always escape the squeezes of ill-paid mandarins who must needs find rice for many mouths. Men who wear official buttons cannot be like Buddhist monks and go round with a rattle and a begging bowl. It is only a month or two back that a Chinese gentleman, who is my near neighbour, hushed his voice to a fearsome whisper and described

the district magistrate as a hungry old hen, scratching over every field in his administration to pick up another grain or two of rice.

Sō I Shuk.—Well, the magistrate is responsible to the Viceroy, and the Viceroy is responsible to the Grand Council and to the Emperor, and when people really begin to suffer under his exactions they can rid themselves of him. They got the last man changed, and perhaps intend to bear with the present to the close of his term, lest they should earn an ill-name for themselves as disloyal and turbulent. Mandarins are compelled to respect the power of the guilds, the local gentry and the villages far and near, and when these agree to act together, he is as helpless as a mosquito between the palms of the two hands. The more blood he has gorged the harder it is for him to fly away unhurt. Our Government is at least cheap, and suits a thrifty people, the exactions falling upon the contentious and upon those who make a parade of their possessions. I can believe that in some countries the taxes imposed by the folly and wickedness of misguided ministers, and the extortion necessary in gathering in the taxes, may be a more widespread grievance, making entire classes bank-

rupt. With us it is only the few who suffer from the extortioners, and they often suffer for their own faults.

Ezra T. Nye.—But amongst Western nations a sympathy goes out towards all classes that cheers and revives like the dew and the rain. Free schools for the poor abound, hospitals for every ailment, homes for the blind and the dumb, and refuges for the aged and the incurably sick, besides many private charities. Your sympathy is almost limited to your friends.

Sō I Shuk.—We tend the old, the poor and the afflicted within the clan, and shall continue to do so whilst the doctrines of filial piety commend themselves to the conscience. It is better to be helped by kinsmen than by strangers, for the gifts from such hands are more cheerful and the humiliation of those receiving less distressing. It seems to me that your poverty must be a bitterer grievance than ours, because the relief of it is allowed to take place outside the family, and the privation becomes known to officials of different clans and surnames. As to those, who, for one reason or another, have drifted away from their clans, and are without kinsmen to care for them, we provide shelters in the larger cities, whilst

in the rural districts they are allowed to sleep in wayside temples. Those who are unfriended can join the beggars' guilds, or, if they are not low down enough for that, can enter the Buddhist Monasteries and be sure of rice to the end of their days. The Chinamen, who, having got rich, become luxurious in their habits and keep away from their native villages, are to be found for the most part in Hong-Kong and Shanghai. Our countrymen settled in foreign countries rarely allow their poor brethren to become a charge upon the community. They even comfort them by covenanting to bring their bodies home for burial. There is little need for orphanages unless for a handful of forsaken girls, probably not more than find their way into your poor-houses. An orphan lad is usually nurtured by uncles, so that he may continue his father's line, and, failing that, is sure of adoption into a family where gaps in the succession occur. We go about things in our own way, but perhaps, after all, do not fall far short of the benevolence exercised by the men of the West.

Ezra T. Nye.—But is not the clan system itself sometimes an occasion of wrong? It is said to beget partiality and make men suspicious

and exclusive. And now and again it raises barriers to the practice of right towards those who are outside the favoured circles of families.

Sō I Shuk.—It may be so, yet the system has proved itself good, and has been strengthened by the experience of many centuries. It is a bulwark of defence for the weak, and gives a power of united action you do not possess through the suffrage. We are free, and you are less your own masters in every relationship of life than we, in spite of your boast that you have banished tyrants. Is there the same equal brotherhood between men of all classes in the outside countries as in the Middle Kingdom?

Ezra T. Nye.—I must allow that the great peril of Western countries is the dislike the different classes have for each other. The rich despise the poor and the poor dislike the rich. The doctrine of Jesus, which teaches universal brotherhood, has softened this feeling here and there, but has failed to entirely remove it. There are churches which are the churches of rich men, and there are churches which are the churches of poor men. In America we do our best to remove this feeling by educating all classes in our common schools, but when the boys grow up and meet each other as master

and workman, the mutual aversion revives. All are alike however in that matter, for we have the same dispositions. You have your rich who in some cases are proud, and your poor who in some cases are envious.

Sō I Shuk.—True. But the clan system does much to alleviate, if not to cure the evil. Clan opinion does not allow a man to isolate himself from his kinsmen and spend his money in selfish extravagance. Riches, literary honour and the prestige of office are in some degree shared with the clan. Probably every clan of the hundred surnames has, at some time or other, had one of its members in high office, and expects some day to have others, so the mandarins can never become a separate caste who despise their own brethren and forefathers. Within recent centuries the emperor has been shielded from the common view and made to live a sequestered life in the palace. But in the Golden Age he was expected to share his enjoyments with the people, and that doctrine is infused into every school-boy and never fades from his mind. If all that is said of a gulf between the rich and poor in outside countries be true, you might still learn from the wisdom of our early sages. It is possible to have most of the advantages arising

from an equal division of property without riot and civil war.

"Leung Wai Wong was standing on the edge of a pond in his park looking round at the large geese and deer. Seeing Mencius standing near by, he said 'Do wise and good princes find pleasure in these things?'

"The philosopher replied: 'Being wise and good they have pleasure in these things. If they are not wise and good, though they have these things, they do not find pleasure.'"

The Book of Poetry tells how King Man used the strength of his people to build his tower and dig his ponds, and the multitudes came about him like children, and he could scarcely restrain them in their zeal to help forward his work. "The ancients caused the people to have pleasure as well as themselves, and therefore they could enjoy it."

"Is it a fact," asked T'sun the king of T'sai, "that the park of King Man really contained more than twenty square miles?"

"Yes," said Mencius, "and the people still looked upon it as small."

"Why," said the king, "my park is not twelve square miles, and the people look upon it as large."

"The park of King Man," said Mencius, "was indeed thirty square miles, but the people had the right of cutting grass and gathering fuel there, and no game-laws were in force. In your park the taking of hares and pheasants is punished as though it were manslaughter. He shared it with the people, and was it not with reason the people looked upon it as small?"

Ezra T. Nye.—Well, of course, that is excellent doctrine for any country, but Mencius did not find it carried out in his day, and things are no better now. This idea of having all things common within the clan does not diminish but rather aggravates the difficulty. It transplants the quarrel between the "haves" and the "have nots" from the world to the home, and that is no improvement.

Sō I Shuk.—Sometimes, but not always. A man is inclined by his sense of kinship to share with his own when he would not care to share with strangers. Our doctrine is a compromise between "Every man for himself" (individualism), and "Each man for all" (collectivism). You have not settled yet which principle is to rule, whilst we get on very well with our working compromise, which is really founded in the nature of things.

Ezra T. Nye.—But a man may be hectored and down-trodden by his own family or group of families, and the individual freedom enjoyed by the men of the West is better as a starting-point, although of course every argument should be used to induce him to use his freedom for the good of others.

Sō I Shuk.—But too much freedom tends to lawlessness and self-interest. It is sufficient if the family and the clan have a legitimate latitude conceded to them by the State. If the freedom of the individual is regulated and controlled by the authorities of the clan, it will probably be exercised for the common good rather than for personal interests and ambitions. A freedom so limited, and exercised for impersonal ends, may possibly yield more inward contentment than the freedom in which you boast yourselves. It is admitted that the Chinese are, as a rule, well satisfied with their lot, some even say too well-satisfied.

CHAPTER IV

THE ETHICS OF THE EAST AND WEST

“I am in despair. I have not yet seen one who can perceive his own errors and inwardly accuse himself.”—CONFUCIUS.

Chü Ning On.—How pleasant it is to meet again in sight of our ancestral temple, with the summer winds rustling through the old banyan, and the buffaloes wallowing on the edge of the fish pool, just as when we were school friends more than twenty years ago. I congratulate you upon the distinction you have reached as chief secretary to the prefect, and upon all the good that will come in your way when you go to take up your appointment as magistrate of Wing Lok. You have added greatly to the prestige of the clan. I wish you yet higher rank and fresh accessions both to your wealth and the number of your sons.

Chü Tip Kai.—My respectful thanks. I, the younger brother, am unworthy of so much

praise, and dare not presume to aspire after higher honours. Congratulations are due to you upon your good fortune in reaching home again after crossing the great waves of the sea, and braving heat and snow. You also have done good to the clan and have made gifts to its common funds, besides finding employment for some of our less prosperous sons and nephews. A village is more dependent upon the wealth of its leading inhabitants than upon the literary merit of its scholars, for in the emperor's service money is not easily made. The double-eyed peacock-feather men may get rich, but we fellows of the brass and crystal button grades can scarcely make our rice if we keep the two hands clean. I hear you have had much good fortune for the past twenty years, and can come home and live quietly for the rest of your days, before you are a grey-beard. Your parents must have been buried in lucky ground. What geomantic expert chose the soil for your family graves?

Chü Ning On.—My good fortune has been modest, but that is not the interpretation of it. Through the favour of Heaven I found friends amongst the men of the West, and whilst living abroad in their country learned the efficacy of many of their medicines. After saving a few

hundred dollars I came back to our own country, and have since been an importer of quinine and other useful drugs. Not that I am rich, but I have a handful or two of rice to spare for those of my own flesh, and I am anxious to show that my new religion bears better fruit than that in which I was first trained.

Chü Tip Kai.—But you are only jesting when you say that you have submitted to the foreigners' religion? I could not believe that you had been so stupid when I was told the rumour. "I have heard of birds flitting from dark passes to lofty trees, but I have not heard of them flitting from lofty trees to go down into dark valleys" (Mencius). You might surely have contented yourself with taking the barbarians' silver in the way of trade without doubling up your body to enter the mean gateway of their teaching. No subject of the Great Pure dynasty should cease to be a Chinaman and insult Confucius and his school by worshipping a sage of uncivilised tribes.

Chü Ning On.—That I try to follow the teaching of Jesus is true, but I have neither cut off my pigtail nor shown contempt for the teaching of Confucius. One may surely learn from the men of the West without wearing their

clothes. It is my belief in family virtue, as set forth by the sage, my desire to restore the worship of the Supreme to whom the ancient kings sacrificed, as well as my loyalty to the doctrine of the root-mind (the conscience), explained in the Four Books, which have led me to become a disciple of Jesus. I am a better Confucianist than in my youth, for I think fondly of my ancestors, and whilst doing what little I can to help others, am not unmindful of brothers and cousins who spring from the same forefathers. I have learned self-rule in some things, and shall not need to make amends by becoming a vegetarian in my last days. The terrors and distresses that once ruffled my peace are dispersed, and although I no longer follow the superstitious customs of the crowd, I do not find the precepts of our honoured sage so hard to fulfil as beforetime.

Chü Tip Kai.—I have seen little of the disciples of Jesus, but from what I have heard they are a strange class and not to be compared with the disciples of Confucius. Every race has its special merits and its peculiar defects, and although we may fail in insignificant matters where they excel, when the long and the short are reckoned up together, the pre-

eminence assuredly rests with us. We excel in the things which are of chief importance and fail perhaps in points that are only trivial. Filial piety is judged to be the head of all the virtues, but they are said to attach little weight to its observance, and in some cases parents minister to their children and even bow down and serve in their presence.

Chü Ning On.—But that is an exaggeration into which the ignorant fall. The sacred books of Jesus make filial piety of great moment, although they inculcate the spirit of that duty rather than prescribe the outward forms which are current with us. Our view of the duty has been fixed by what seemed necessary for the well-being of the family and the preservation of the clan. They do not allow the sentiment to pervert righteousness. In their law courts a man who has neither money nor a guild or powerful clan to back his cause has a better hope of justice than in ours. In public affairs they are as clean-handed and upright as our ancients.

Chü Típ Kai.—Perhaps the impartial righteousness in which they pride themselves may take its rise in a deficiency of family feeling, for it is said the bonds which unite the members of

the home are slight. Some even declare that they live together as promiscuously as the wild tribes of the forests. One of the feudal dukes boasted that in his part of the country the sense of public justice was so strong that a son would bear witness against a sheep-stealing father. Confucius replied that "righteousness in our part of the country is not after that model. The father conceals the misconduct of the son and the son conceals the misconduct of the father." The men of the West perhaps cultivate the righteousness of the duke rather than that of the sage. When Mencius was asked if Koo Sau, the evil-minded father of the Emperor Shun, had murdered a man, and the minister of justice had ordered his arrest, what course the emperor would have taken? Mencius replied, "he would have resigned the throne and carried his father away on his back and lived in some secluded place on the sea-shore to the end of his days. He would have been happy and content, forgetting the empire."

Chü Ning On.—Such conflicts between duty and natural sentiment do not often occur, but it is dangerous to allow even the sentiment of affection to play the tyrant over all other virtues. Jesus certainly taught that when the

instincts of the family are at variance with truth and righteousness, truth and righteousness must be followed at all costs. He himself was a pattern of filial piety towards both earth and heaven, and He taught that, by obeying the highest duty, natural affection would not be permanently extinguished but revived. For members of the same family and clan to conceal each other's misdoings to the injury of righteousness, cannot in the end do good to any one, least of all to those whose trespasses are condoned. The righteousness which finds favour in our own country scarcely ever regards that which lies beyond the family and the clan, or at least its motives are partisan. A mandarin comes into office, and almost all his secretaries, cook and waiters are his own kinsmen. When a crime has been committed, the elders of the clan always try to conceal the culprit, and so bring themselves into conflict with the law. Rich men who subscribe to new business enterprises are bent on putting their sons and nephews into positions of trust rather than honest and capable men of whatever name, and the enterprises are wrecked. No end of trouble and confusion arises from the fact that we glorify the family feeling, which issues

in partiality, and our name for truth and uprightness is no better than it ought to be. If we make the obligation of filial piety swallow up all other obligations, we can never have harmonious feeling with those outside our own clan and country, nor can we be at one with the mind of Heaven. The Emperor Shun, living by the sea-shore and keeping watch over a guilty father, would not have fulfilled his obligations either to his contemporaries or to the Supreme God whose mandate he had received. How could he have been the happy and contented recluse Mencius imagined? He would have been little better than a Buddhist priest, save for fulfilling the one obligation of filial piety. It is these false ideals of keeping ourselves to ourselves, which have excluded us from the brotherhood of nations and made us a laughing stock.

Chü Tip Kai.—But filial piety is the root, and the root must be greater than the branch. The justice which seeks the punishment of an offence is surely subordinate to this great solemn relation upon which human life rests.

Chü Ning On.—But I am not sure it is filial piety to screen an offender from his just deserts because he is of the same flesh and bone. We

are too prone to look upon man as beginning and ending his destiny within the limits of the family. Man is the offspring of heaven before he becomes as an infant the inmate of a home, and as our proverb says, "Heaven has no partiality." There must be a Divine precept binding both upon the minister of justice who seeks to punish the crime of Koo Sau, and upon Shun whom affection would prompt to carry off an offending father to some place of sanctuary. The minister of justice might claim that his right to inflict penalty was from Heaven, and Shun might claim that his filial instincts were also from Heaven. Both could not be right. All duties are to be harmonised with each other, and are not hostile, like hunter and quarry in the chase. There is a righteousness which is broader than families or nations, broad as the sky itself, and it must not be sacrificed to a false view of filial piety. Sometimes perhaps the only way of honouring parents is to allow them to fall under the teaching of the discipline which will make them worthy of honour.

Chü Tip Kai.—As you say, these cases are infrequent. Our traditions have not failed in training honest and upright men. The heads of banks and shipping offices, as well as import

and export merchants, say that our native traders are the most trustworthy people in the world and rarely run away from their obligations. Our integrity is equal to theirs, and perhaps superior. I have heard that within recent years, since men of various nations have come here to buy and sell, and riches have not been made so quickly because the profits are small, the men of the West do not command the same business confidence as in former days.

Chü Ning On.—But the honesty which foreigners praise in us is not so much a virtue which is the growth of the moral sense, as a useful substitute for the virtue which is a product of the clan organisation. Traders and shroffs, cooks and house-boys who serve Europeans are honest because they have rich and powerful clansmen who become their sureties, and if by embezzlement or secret commissions they were to land their sureties in trouble, they would forfeit the favour of their villages and become outcasts. Unless a man chooses to be true and upright because his conscience prompts him to these things, apart from the social arrangements which are intended to make and keep him so, those qualities can scarcely count as virtues of character.

Chü Tip Kai.—But the men of the West are influenced by the judgments of those with whom they consort, and do not always act from the principles which are supposed to be in them. It is said that comparatively few of the red-haired traders, after they have been a few months from their native lands, practise the precepts of their ancestral faith, and that in our Treaty Ports they do many things that would not be countenanced at home. At least their country would soon come to confusion if they formed the same habits there as are common here.

Chü Ning On.—That may be so, but in the exercise of some virtues they certainly surpass us. They are fearless, and in nine cases out of ten even their bad men speak the truth without equivocation and periphrasis. The Master said, "I do not know how a man without truthfulness is to get on."

Chü Tip Kai.—He also said, "Straight-forwardness without the rules of good breeding becomes rudeness." I am not sure he would have praised the rank virtue as it shows itself in some of the barbarians. He would have liked the truth sweetening a little. But all are not after one pattern. Some speak the truth

pure and simple, and some so speak it that you have to find out where it is in what they have said. I have heard an under secretary in the Tsung Li Board say that their officials use as much guile, and make as many fair promises as the smoothest of our statesmen. It is not considered falsehood when they speak plausibly for the good of their country, even if it is not for the good of ours. It is said they tell their sovereign that opium is harmless, that the Chinese see no evil in gambling, and look upon it as an excellent source of revenue, and that the license of social evil involves no slavery. Perhaps they rely upon the opinions of Chinamen of whom they are assured beforehand they will say what it is desired they should say. Our deceit never goes so far as that. If we do not always say what we mean, we judge ourselves true to the claim of fidelity when we do nothing hurtful to the clan and the commonwealth. They vary the truth to the wishes of the chief officials of the Government, and are less faithful to the public good than the heads of our Government. They have few, if any men, who are as honest as our official censors. We at least keep faith with those who prove themselves our friends, and to keep faith with aliens who

have no care for our morals is what is not required from us.

Chü Ning On.—There again you belittle faithfulness into a mere art for serving the welfare of the clan or the family, and forget that the pattern of it is to be found in the overspreading heavens. We need to make the virtue large and impartial. The thought that there is a Spirit who searches the heart, and that nothing escapes His judgment, helps to deliver men from the respect of persons, and trains them into sincere seekers of that which is real.

Chü Tip Kai.—Our sages taught the same doctrine, and, more important still, led us to believe that the spirits of our forefathers look with pleasure or disapproval upon the acts of their descendants, a persuasion that for all practical purposes has twice the weight of the other.

Chü Ning On.—But if such an idea is uppermost, it must encourage partiality, for ancestors are supposed to show peculiar favour to those who are of their own flesh and blood. That tends to keep our race-virtues clannish rather than cosmopolitan in their range of application. In most cases our sense of duty is apt to stop short at the Great Wall and the city of Tai Li

Foo in the west. No wonder foreigners will not allow themselves to be judged in our Law Courts. A man's responsibilities do not end with those who bear the same surname, although they may begin there. The doctrine of Jesus teaches that because God's compassion is impartial, men should try and copy His far-reaching kindness. That has led to the abolition of cruel customs in Christian nations, trial by torture and organised systems of slavery, and has called forth a higher sense of the sacredness of life than is common amongst Eastern nations. There is little infanticide, they have no such unfeeling customs as foot-binding, and in saving the lives of entire strangers they will sometimes risk their own. There are almshouses for the poor in their cities, so that none need die of starvation, and hospitals in which the sick and the maimed of every name and nation may be healed. It is rare for any one to end his days in the streets or by the wayside as with us. They are not restrained by a dread of ghosts from helping those who are in peril.

Chü Típ Kai.—Whether that is due to the teaching of Jesus or not is uncertain. Perhaps that teaching only makes itself felt at intervals. A book distributed by the missionaries at the

last examination for provincial graduates, asserts that in the reign of Kā Hing their customs were no better than ours, children being employed as slaves in their mines and factories, and men sentenced to death for crimes we punish with the stocks and the bastinado, whilst debtors were sent to prisons that killed them as surely as the scaffold. They had, I presume, the same religion then. Can it be that it bears fruit in some generations and not in others? It is said that the nations which follow the religion of Jesus are fast losing their sense of the sacredness of life. Perhaps when their countries become as populous as ours, and no new lands are in view to which the people can go, they also will think of the surplus population as a burden not to be too tenderly nursed. As to the treatment of the poor, the problem is solved by our zeal for filial piety. We cherish the aged. Except in times of famine, the clan funds are a sufficient defence against starvation for those who do not drift out of their relationships and pass into the ranks of city thieves and beggars. The sense of kinship constrains us to help those who in other lands would become paupers. The worship we pay to grey hairs is not without its

economic advantages, for it keeps the control of money in the hands of those who are wise through years and have no desire to squander it. The future priesthood of the family is to be exercised by our male offspring, and it is only when men are panic-stricken with fear, or overwhelmed with debt, that they consent to part with that offspring. Under ordinary circumstances, there is not the same scope for foundling and other charities in our life as in the life of the West. Nature, moreover, in the South at least, is kind to us, and we can do with less food and raiment without becoming destitute than races in the colder regions.

Chü Ning On.—But the partiality of our virtue again asserts itself. Our care and tenderness we reserve chiefly for male issue, which is to cultivate the soil and continue the family sacrifices. The daughters who have to pass at marriage into other clans we sometimes neglect and despise. The love cherished by parents towards their children becomes deteriorated by self-interest, and we need a new view of life, and an enlarged sense of duty, to enable us to deal more fairly with girls and women.

Chü Tip Kai.—I do not think we are likely to take the barbarians as our instructors in morals. Their own practices involve discrepancies no one can explain. Every foreign wife has the power and state of an empress, and her husband and his friends run after her palanquin and bow at her nod as though they were court attendants. But when a Chinese woman fills that place in a foreigner's home, for a time she is secretly cherished, publicly ignored, and at last flung back upon the street in a way no female slave would be dealt with in a Chinese household. Our society finds no place for an unattached woman without husband, child, or male representative. It is more humane to put a female infant into the creek or on to the refuse-heap than to allow her to grow up into a "sea-shore girl" (a foreigner's mistress), and become a mother of unfathered half-breeds. It is true the class is well fed and well clothed for a time, but the realms of Yama do not cease to be foul because in the intervals of their torment the victims wear fine raiment.

Chü Ning On.—Such things may be too common amongst the Western men who dwell in China, but in the countries from which

missionaries come are strongly disapproved. You do not know the type of home fostered by the spirit of Jesus, when you walk through a foreign concession or spy out the sights to be found in the worst streets of Hong-Kong, or Shanghai. In countries truly Christian, the family life is pure, sacred, harmonious, and such as our sages would have praised. To be a guest in a household of the West is like an ascension into the Buddhist Paradise. Music, order, and the pursuit of letters are varied with blithe and innocent pastimes for the young. We shall never know the satisfactions of home till we educate our women, and abandon polygamy,—a practice which is forbidden to the disciples of Jesus. As Chinamen, we know too well that such arrangements rarely add to the peace of the family, even when a wise and reasonable woman, free from every trace of jealousy, is at the head of it. We could not bear the endless clash and feud if we spent as much time in our homes as foreigners spend in theirs. The fact that we are abroad more, and desire to be, is proof that our family circles have not the same charm and attractiveness, although they are formed of the same sort of people.

Chü Tip Kai.—Such arrangements, which have existed from the days of the ancient kings, of course have their drawbacks. But a man needs sons to continue the ancestral sacrifices, or he will bear the reproach which cleaves to the unfilial. Have you forgotten that Mencius said, “There are three things which are unfilial, and to have no posterity is the greatest of them.” And after all, is not our system better than European looseness? A Chinese father always recognises his relationship to the children of subordinate wives, and the female head of the family cherishes the children of different mothers and calls them her own.

Chü Ning On.—Of course we do our best to palliate the evils of a misguided system, but whilst such systems are sanctioned, the relation of husband and wife can never be one of perfect accord. As a matter of fact, the wife always has heart-burnings against her rivals, even though they are inferiors and subject to her authority; and the sons of different mothers fight with each other like bandits dividing their booty. With our experience upon this question, we scarcely need a religious law to inhibit this perversion of the family idea.

Chü Tip Kai.—The precept of Jesus may be

good, although it is against filial piety to say a man must leave father and mother and be joined to his wife; but the practice of his adherents is not a pleasant subject to talk about. If at the setting of the watch when the foreigners "eat the great meal," you walk past the back doors of the "*hongs*," or if you happen to be abroad an hour before sunrise, you cannot fail to see Chinese girls flitting to and fro, who wear foreign slippers and dress the hair according to a style that is not ours, and who have little or no sense of shame. It is true the masters who own or hire them by the month, do not profess for the time to observe Christian customs. They go into the country snipe and duck-shooting on worship day. But when they rise to the chief places in their firms, and perhaps become partners, they return home for a six months' holiday, marry wives of their own country, and come back to China and act as if they had been Christians all the time. They go to worship when the day comes round as if they had never missed—at least, they do so till the new wife's health fails, and she has to return for a time to her native land, and then in comes Miss Willow-Blossom again, and the wish for Sunday shooting returns. These evil

customs are shown in many ways. Two or three of my wife's nephews had learned English in the Hong-Kong High School. A foreigner who wished to show his Chinese learning used to send lists of local phrases to one of the English newspapers. Many of the words were such as are never used by men and only by the lowest of the women. These youths were in the habit of getting the newspaper and reading over with jeers the list of words sent by this unsuspecting foreigner. They clapped their hands, laughed with a merriment it was hard to choke down, and exclaimed: "We know where the Consul's interpreter goes to school." No one needed to be told that he had got his particular knowledge of the *patois* from a woman who was not respectable.

Chü Ning On.—Such things cause shame and wrath. Amongst men of all nations it is possible to find both good and bad. If you seek for the good you can find them, even amongst the men of the West. Those whom I accept as my teachers in religion never fall into such vicious ways, and a few of the merchants and consuls are also without reproach. Within their homes may be seen a peace, a happy order, a self-restraint to which

we rarely attain. It may be that their good men surpass ours, and that their bad men go to greater excesses of wickedness.

Chü Tip Kai.—The fact that most of these men from the Outside States live loosely, causes doubt concerning the few who are of correct outward life, especially when their manners are so effusive, and there is practically no separation of the sexes. To a subject of the Great Pure dynasty, it seems as though the division of labour had been carried to the extreme of madness. Just as with us, one man cultivates the five grains, and another weaves, and a third is a potter, so amongst the barbarians, certain classes are set apart to practise virtues, whilst other classes are excused from such duties, but render other useful services. Perhaps under the guidance of the sovereign, there is an interchange like the barter which was practised in primitive society, and the merits of the religious men are put down to the merchants, whilst some of the gains of the merchants are transferred to the missionaries. Student interpreters generally pose as model family men when they become consuls in the more important ports. The whole thing looks like a play in which the actors have arranged their

parts beforehand, some taking the heroic, and some the dishonourable parts.

Chii Ning On.—The thing may be so stated as to cause a laugh, but the fact that foreign life has such different sides is due to the freedom of Western countries. Whilst Foreign Governments approve of the religion of Jesus, and conform to it, they do not interfere with their subjects, unless they commit crime against the laws or the laws of the country in which they sojourn. Men who choose to live in vice are removed from the Church, however rich and influential they may be; or at least they know the customs so well that they remove themselves beforehand. Such irregular relations are bad, but have we any right to speak of these scandals? In Australia our own countrymen live with Irish women, and in Mandalay with Burmans, and in Singapore with Malays, and in the trading towns at the foot of the mountains with the Lais and the Mius. These, no less than the men of the Western nations, when they do such things, follow sensual inclinations and repress their better instincts and convictions. The virtue which truly belongs to a man is that which he chooses to practise, and not that into which he

may be forced. Why should we be hard upon a foreign, and excuse a Chinese transgressor?

Chü Tip Kai.—But there are differences between the two classes of offence. The native women who are owned by foreigners, or at least owned by their compradors, and leased at so much a month, have in many cases been kidnapped in the interior and passed on through brokers to their present life. Sometimes parents are compelled by poverty to sell their daughters, but foreigners, who boast that by paying more than the market price, and putting money into circulation, they are performing acts of charity to a poverty-stricken people, do not realise that every Chinaman feels insulted when the meanest offspring of even an impoverished clan reaches such a destiny. There are Chinamen heroic enough to drown their daughters rather than resign them to such a lot. Besides, these foreigners who become fathers in this way never notice their own children. It is the Chinese blood in them they despise, and that is an added insult to our race. I wonder the few foreigners who have the honesty and the courage to marry Chinese wives do not beat the drum and drive

out the rest, for the shame felt of their own offspring seems to put all offspring of the mixed marriage into the class of illegitimates. These men go back to their countries, marry wives of their own race, and have no more care for their first families than dogs, buffaloes, and tigers, for their progeny. If the riches they have accumulated do not quite suffice, and they come back to the Middle Kingdom, they get appointed, if possible, to other Treaty Ports, and their half-breed sons become clerks, printers, and head policemen, whilst daughters follow the careers of the mother at rather higher rates of pay. Such is the family chaos which prevails amongst foreigners. No wonder we say they have no knowledge of the family relationships. Our countrymen who have had sons by foreign women always bring them back home and get them incorporated into their clans. The officials of foreign Governments sometimes live this kind of life under the flags of their respective countries, and are rarely recalled unless their habits at last render them too imbecile for the transaction of public business.

Chü Ning On.—But these loose habits of life into which foreigners fall on Chinese soil

are like the fever and pestilence which abound in particular districts only. If the countries professing the religion of Jesus were as bad as the Foreign Concessions, such countries could not grow and prosper. In England, America, and Germany, strict usages prevail, and family life is seldom corrupt. The higher standard set up in Christian lands is seen in the fact that it would be fatal to a foreigner's respectability and good name, if he were to take half-caste children to his own country, whilst our own returned emigrants bring back the children of all kinds of mothers without any sense of shame.

Chü Tip Kai.—Your words come to this, that men do the same things everywhere, and that the higher the code of morality professed, the deeper the hypocrisy into which they fall. You said not long since that foreigners surpassed us in honesty. But in their own country it is rumoured things are not much better than here. I have a friend who was attached to the staff of one of the Chinese envoys in London, and he told me that an interpreter who had been in China was sent by the Board of Foreign Affairs to act as guide to his Excellency and followers,

and to escort them to the different sights of London. He took them to a theatre which was crowded and illumined with coloured lamps. Till his Excellency looked through his double-eyed distance glass he could not tell whether the girls who were dancing on the stage had clothes on or not. The envoy professed to be pleased, for he was always polite, and said it was prettier than anything he had seen ; but when he came back home he told his friends the customs were those of savages, and none of his grandchildren should be educated in the schools of the West. But why need we speak of other lands? The dresses and the dancing at the foreign yamuns and guild houses are worse than those which disgusted Confucius and led him to resign service under the Duke of Lō. Such customs never make virtuous families.

Chü Ning On.—Some customs may not become us, but we must allow for differences of race and training, and not treat strangers as criminals because they are somewhat outlandish. It is character by which we judge men, and not the husk of custom in which character is hidden. Human nature is the same everywhere till the Divine power renews

and improves it, and a foreigner who disobeys his religion is as bad as a Chinaman who disobeys his. The question is, which religion, when it is obeyed, will carry men higher and make them truer friends of the whole race.

Chü Típ Kai.—The countries which profess to follow the teaching of Jesus should enforce it on their subjects. It seems to me that Western religions have no authority, or they do not exercise it on the side of virtue. They repress stealing because they are zealous for trade, and stealing is against trade, but they stop at that point. We have mutual sponsorship, and by the authority of the aged over the young, and parents over posterity, and the gentry over the villages, and the Son of Heaven over the eighteen provinces, we can make some show of conformity to Confucius. But Western Governments honour Jesus, and sometimes use their authority in establishing the vices He condemned. The precepts of Jesus are set at naught by soldiers and sailors, traders and officials alike, and seem to be prized only by a few who are looked down upon by their own countrymen as though they belonged to a meaner class.

Chü Ning On.—The more spiritual a re-

ligion is, and the loftier its precepts, the less can it be enforced by civil authority. A man must himself choose to obey its laws, and use right methods of acquiring strength to obey. But these things are difficult to judge. Our discussion has been long and the sun slants. I must go home and make ready for the clan feast held to celebrate your promotion. We will take up the subject again. Kindly permit me to retire.

CHAPTER V

OPIUM AND THE COMITY OF NATIONS

“Who says of Wei Shang Ko that he is upright? One begged some vinegar of him and he begged it of a neighbour and gave it.”—CONFUCIUS.

Brigadier Nang.—When your Queen appointed a Commission to enquire into the opium trade I foretold the result. It was a device adopted with the object of fortifying the growth and manufacture of the drug in India. Of course I know the effect of smoking it both on the health and the efficiency of the men under my command, and I strictly prohibit it. But I did not wish to give a public expression of opinion that might bring me into disfavour with the other branches of the Emperor's service, and expose me also to the contempt and ill-will of the foreigners. The latter never miss a chance of weakening my influence.

Paul Brown.—But you are a patriot, and the question is your concern rather than ours. The

missionaries, to which class your younger brother belongs, wish to further the welfare of all classes of the Chinese people, and have been consistent and disinterested opponents of a trade that works so much evil. They at least are not afraid to incur the reproach of their own countrymen, and do not fear to say that China has been unfairly treated. You might have ventured to strengthen our hands. You would have won our gratitude and at the same time have served the best interests of your country. We, on the one hand, get little official support and approval for all our writing and speaking upon the question, and on the other, often incur the displeasure of many in authority, who call us fanatic and charge us with exaggeration. Our political influence is small, and it is not much we can do alone. The mischief alights upon the bodies and homes of your poor, decrepit kinsmen, but an etiquette which, though not heroic, is at least expedient, seems to seal your lips when a word might do something towards the salvation of your empire.

Brigadier Nang.—The representatives of your honoured Government never took the trouble to ask our opinion, and probably did not want it. If they had thought fit to consult our

officials they would probably have asked permission to collect the views of those interested in the excise receipts. Any suppression of the trade would of course be attended with financial inconvenience, and could not be carried through in a day, or even a year. It is a costly and a tedious task to undo the error of years, and one is reminded of the popular proverb, "To do right is like climbing a mountain, and to do wrong like riding down it on a land-slide." Alas! alas! for our people and their rulers! If your honourable Government had wished to consult the unofficial classes of the Chinese, it should have taken steps to get into communication with the gentry, who are responsible for the order and well-being of their neighbourhoods, and who are untouched by foreign influence. Men who speak for their immediate clansmen usually have more deeply at heart the moral issues of the question than Chinamen living in the midst of disintegrated and promiscuous populations. Foreigners engaged in the opium trade, whose callings were scrupulously concealed, spoke, and great weight was attached to their testimony by some of the Commissioners, but such testimony simply echoed the unreal opinions of fawning compradors and servants who have a

monopoly of the wires conveying information on native questions to masters who speak only English. Ai-yah! Ai-yah! I could laugh over the farce till I broke in two, if it were not so pitiful.

Paul Brown.—I admit that not much importance should be attached to such witnesses, but we take pride in our truthfulness, and as some little excuse for these witnesses, it perhaps ought to be said that the worst effects of opium smoking are not always to be found on the Foreign Concessions. Amongst the native *employés* of the merchants, as you know, a high rate of wages rules, and nourishing food can be procured, which often, though not always, averts the disastrous effects prevalent amongst the poor and the ill-fed. No opium-sot would be continued in foreign employment, but would be dismissed, nominally, for laziness or incompetence. And when a man is impoverished by the vice, unless for some reason or other he has already lost favour with his clan, he is sure to be shipped off to his native village, where living is cheap, and he can quietly end his days as a poor dependent on the community of his blood-relations. It is in the villages and in the poorer suburbs of the city that the worst

effects of the vice are to be found. I would not charge these witnesses even who are apologising for their own trade with direct falsehood. In your official position as well as through private intercourse with your friends, you know more than the sleek and prosperous *employés* of the foreigners, who cultivate the art of speaking what they know the master wants to hear. We do hope for direct and courageous speech from a military leader who has won repeated promotion by his valour on the battle-field. An officer of the Government, like the pattern emperor of the ancient times, ought to take upon his own person the sins of the people. Could you not help in averting the wretchedness and debauchery caused by this ever-spreading vice?

Brigadier Nang.—But I am not the Emperor, and the powers of my office are defined, or there would soon be confusion in all the districts and provinces of the empire. Perhaps in the end the curse upon my country will be lighter than upon yours, if what I have been taught is true, that the retribution upon the tempter is sharper than upon the tempted. It does not seem like it at present, but, as we often say, “the hour is not yet.” I am a friend

of your country, for a missionary doctor took a bullet out of my back that had been troubling me for years, and an American taught some of my troops musketry, so I shall not rejoice in your calamity. But the anger of our foreigner-hating patriots will be more than appeased by all that will come to pass, and they will no longer think it necessary to bombard the settlements.

Paul Brown.—If such is the General's belief and disposition, he ought to show himself the friend of our country by helping to open its eyes. Your kindness and good motives are known to many, and in so doing, you would be doing your best to save us from the penalty of political selfishness and misdoing. Missionaries have been crying aloud for fifty years, and at one time all the churches rallied to their side, but the words spoken by merchants and consuls in China, by army doctors and excisemen in India, and by Government officials at home, have divided the churches, which really aspire to practise the doctrine of reciprocity, and, for the time being, the churches no longer speak with one voice.

Brigadier Nang.—But do men ever want to know facts which hurt their reputations and are against their financial interests? If your

country does not believe its own missionaries, it is not likely to believe Chinese officials, whom its chief newspapers call "a generation of liars." When the eyes are resolutely closed, it needs a clever doctor to open them. It is useless speaking to those who do not wish to be convinced, or who are so occupied with their own affairs that they have neither time nor inclination to listen. Many of your countrymen even in China sit in long chairs on verandahs, with all native life out of view, and then go forth and speak as if they had lived amongst the people and knew the eighteen provinces. Of course, that is not exactly falsehood as you understand the word, but to speak without knowledge, and all the time profess to possess it, may be quite as bad. We have the same word for the two things.

Paul Brown.—But the evidence of the great officer and his honourable comrades might have enlightened those who had no direct political or financial interests at stake, and who had not resolved to close their minds to the truth. The electors who, in the end, finally determine these things, cannot see for themselves, and must see through the eyes of other people. How are they to know the men who

praised the virtues of opium, and declared the trade was good, had lived in China without using their eyes and ears?

Brigadier Nang.—Perhaps even the electors whom you praise are not anxious to know the truth. When you can no longer derive money from China through the opium trade wherewith to keep up your administration in importunate and poverty-stricken India, the electors may have to find it themselves. Judging from those pieces of the opium evidence which have been translated into the Chinese newspapers, the electors might know the facts, if they would only take the pains. Doctors in India affirmed that millions of Hindús swallow a few grains a day without injury, but that to smoke the drug was degrading and deadly; the Indian Government therefore agreed to suppress shops for smoking the drug. Through the eighteen provinces of China not one man in a hundred eats it, and to fail in seeing that the smoking, which is bad for India, cannot be good for China, is a proof either of extreme stupidity or of unwillingness to consider the facts. The natives in India, I am told, do not consume one-tenth part of the opium which is produced there, and yet the population is almost as large. To look at the

Indian side of the question, and then pass a guess-work judgment upon the Chinese, is like examining the finger-nail of one man to see whether the carbuncle growing on the neck of another is likely to drain away his strength and destroy him. To form conclusions which concern China upon the evidence of men in India, without visiting China itself, and making careful and prolonged enquiries here, is a piece with asking the Legation physician in Peking to write out a prescription for the Llama of Thibet or the King of Corea. English gentlemen perhaps do not lie, but to look at one bit of the question and ignore the body of facts at the centre of it, is like professing to feel the pulse in the silk plaits of the pig-tail. My countrymen cannot juggle so astutely. Missionaries inform the people of the West of many things in the life of China which consuls and ministers do not know. Perhaps your country will one day believe your view of this question is true to the facts.

Paul Brown.—But your testimony would have been important from another point of view. Those who think China has not been righteously treated, and who advocate her cause, are taunted with the fact that the Imperial Government now

allows opium to be grown upon an enormous scale in most of the Western provinces, and the cultivation is even creeping down to the seaboard. Such a change of policy, it is said, proves that your statesmen never regarded the use of opium as a vice, that they are quite pacified towards the nation which induced them to change the prohibitive tradition of the past, and that the only real objection ever felt to the trade was the drain of silver at one time caused from your country to the countries of the West.

Brigadier Nang.—The export of silver might be an aggravation of the evil, and it certainly appealed to a sensitive side of the Chinese temperament, for our destiny has compelled us to teach that all waste is wicked ; but the hurtfulness to health and industry, the deterioration of moral habit and character, together with the frequent shortening of life to which it contributes, are too well known to need discussion. Nearly two hundred years ago, before the export of silver was perceived, the emperor Yung Ching issued an edict against opium. If, as your merchants say, every man toys with it now and again, such an occasional use of it can make no appreciable difference to the volume

of the trade, for it is only after it has become a daily craving that the smoker derives pleasure from its use. As to its being a preventive of fever, no Chinaman ever thought that, till your merchants instructed him to say so. The excuse is never heard in the swampiest rice plains, unless the folk have come under foreign influence. As to its popularity as a medicine, medicine is usually prescribed by the doctor, and not by the patient himself, and I understand your doctors use Turkish and not Indian opium. If the motive for the growth and manufacture of opium is so disinterested, would it not be well to abandon the Indian monopoly and encourage the Turkish growth? Of course it soothes pain, just as foreigners sometimes find it blunts the pain of debt to get drunk, but the liabilities are there when the man becomes sober again. In seven cases out of ten, to cure the opium habit is to remove the disease from which a man is supposed to suffer. And even if opium used as a medicine did save one life, why should twenty lives be degraded or destroyed because one man has asthma or consumption? For one man who dies of disease, relieved in the stages of its progress by opium, ten men die of opium alone. More than three

thousand years ago we stopped the custom some wished to introduce of killing a few slaves so that they might be buried with the dead master. It seems as though your countrymen were willing to kill multitudes by the vice of opium-smoking for the sake of two or three incurables, to whom opium may be a god-send. And you kill the slaves not to honour the man whose life disease destroys, but for the gains of trade.

Paul Brown.—You will excuse me for saying so, but you are getting away from the subject, and are forgetting to explain the change in the policy of your Government.

Brigadier Nang.—I will come to that if you will be patient. The price of the home-grown opium is cheaper and the drug itself is not so strong, for the habit of smoking it can be broken off without strict confinement in a hospital and medical care. Our compromise, which has been slowly and reluctantly adopted, and may after a time be abandoned again, has the good fortune to palliate the impoverishment and distress. I do not affirm that was the direct motive, but such has happily been the result. Your country—you will pardon my plain speaking, for I am a soldier and not a literary

mandarin—has the discredit of expanding what was once supposed to be a trade in a medicine into a huge trade, which now ministers almost entirely to noxious luxury and incurable vice. The trade had ceased to be one in medicine long before Commissioner Lin was sent to Canton to stop it. What Government which makes it a duty to nourish the life of the people ever wishes to prevent its sick from buying that which truly heals and restores? We are the sufferers, and in our speech with each other we never fail to classify it as the predominant evil in our life. The close ties which unite us and bind together the generations, perhaps awaken within us a stronger dislike of anti-social sins than your countrymen share. If we have come into partnership with you, the connection is not one of our own choice, and the ill-name is yours. When a commercial firm admits a new partner and retains the old "style" on its sign-board and puts the old "chop" on its samples, it is the original name which suffers. Opium grown in Szchuen and Yunnan is still called "foreign dirt" and "foreign smoke," although many of the people who grow and use it have never seen a foreigner. And it will be so to the end, for names are not easy to change when they have once become current.

Paul Brown.—But it is said our country did not force opium upon the Chinese, and that at the present time China would be sorry to give up its share of the revenue. I say this, because I want to know your opinion. If I were arguing with a fellow-countryman, perhaps I should take the other side of the question.

Brigadier Nang.—It is not for me to see into the heart of the Son of Heaven, but I cannot believe he is faithless to the principles of his ancestors. To sacrifice all the revenue on which we have come to depend may not be convenient at a day's notice, but the English Government is careful not to offer us the opportunity, or to offer it only when it knows we need money. Whether Englishmen in the reign of Hām Fung did force opium on us is known only to those who arranged the treaties; perhaps not even to them, for each side may have put a mistaken construction upon the ideas and intentions of those on the other side. At that time there were no Chinese newspapers except the *Court Gazette*, which of course wished to save the face of the dynasty, and would not represent any of its acts as done under compulsion. What our people do know is that before the wars it was necessary to bribe

officials and smuggle the drug into our country, and after the second war it was placed formally upon the tariff. That may have been a coincidence, but our people doubt it. [If the English Government did not force the trade upon us, then why are they so unwilling to change the clause of the treaty which permits it, and argue for years against any proposals to raise the duties? In a letter to his own Government Sir Thomas Wade wrote that he was afraid, if the duty was raised to our figure, the Chinese Board of Revenue would kill the goose which laid the golden egg. Western nations are not accustomed to act as the guardians of our wealth. Judging from the clamour for mining rights, railway concessions, and the monopoly of our loans, they are usually anxious to coax the birds which lay either golden or silver eggs over into their own pens and farmsteads. But the history of the past fifty years is an insult to our rights as the leading nation of the East, oft-repeated. Your race, in comparison with ours, is as a babe to a grey-bearded patriarch, and is it seemly that the babe should keep the key of the patriarch's treasury?

Paul Brown.—I am not apologising for my country, which has treated China with grievous

unfairness, but it is often said that if the Chinese want to prohibit opium, they are quite free to do it within their own borders. The British Government does not compel the subjects of the Great Pure dynasty to smoke it.

Brigadier Nang.—Perhaps not, but once they buy they will smoke it, and we are compelled to give them the opportunity of buying. Our freedom to prohibit within our own borders was taken away twenty years ago, for when the duty at the port of entry was last raised it was stipulated that we should cease to impose any further duties upon it, as it was carried from district to district in our inland territory. The simplest method of checking the ruin caused by the drug would be to forbid its admission at the port of entry, or to levy such a tax that it could only be imported for medicine. The problem would then be clear and within the reach of our power to settle. Why should you impose upon us the task of restraining men from the use of it in a thousand cities and ten thousand villages? Western countries quarantine their ports against plague and cholera when the peril is grave. Why should we not be free to quarantine our ports against that which is more grievous and deadly than either? Mis-

sionaries are fond of parables, and I will venture to set one forth. Do not say the illustration is frivolous, for clever doctors in Amoy and Hong-Kong have found that the mosquito is more than a nuisance; it is a peril to health and even to life. A giant was accustomed to rest on a couch covered with the finest matting, a lacquered pillow at one end and gossamer nets round the four sides to keep out the mosquitoes. The nights were hot and the thirsty blood-drinkers noisy and watchful. Now and again one or two managed to creep under the walls of silk, and to sneak into the enclosure where the giant slept. No great harm was done, for he lit his lamp, hunted them down, and slew the intruders with the flick of his fan. The next day ill-disposed neighbours burnt five small holes into the curtain, and when night came the vicious insects poured in by scores, for the sleeper was fat and succulent, and the banquet tempting and free to all. Before the third watch had been struck, the hunt for those hosts of intruders began. When the neighbours, who were listening outside the door, heard his groans of pain and the curses he called down upon mischief-makers, they laughed, and told him to suppress the

mosquitoes within his own borders, and not make it a grievance that his protecting nets had been pierced with five little holes from the outside. The next day a few more holes were added to the first five, and on the third day the number of open ports was increased to twenty. No wonder that the giant had bad and feverish nights, and was sometimes heard breathing vengeance against his mischief-making neighbours. Once, it is said, that in a frenzy of pain he rushed out and thrashed the first neighbour he found in the streets. "Put it down within your own borders," is the last word of wisdom from Western statesmen. "Get a new curtain and do not allow holes to be made in it," is the remedy which commends itself to the statesmanship of the East, and I am a man of the East.

Paul Brown.—But unrestricted trade is the rule of the modern world, and Western Governments concede great freedom to their own subjects. England and America do not stop the distillation and sale of spirits, which some affirm work more misery and beget more crime than opium.

Brigadier Nang.—Of the drunkenness of Western countries I hear only reports, and have

no opportunity of seeing for myself. Perhaps those who thus speak know as little of the mischief wrought by one of the two evils compared together as I know of the other. But because England and America are content that their people should be impoverished and debauched, that is no reason why China should copy their example. Hale and wholesome men should be set up as models for our children, and not the crippled and the diseased. It is said that amongst some half-civilised tribes, if the chief falls off his horse, all his followers are required by etiquette to fall off theirs. Must we indeed copy the humiliation of the great Powers of the West. If your nations are drunken we shall be the less inclined to acknowledge your suzerainty and copy your example. Our people are content to be ruled by those in authority over them, and if opium were stopped, the cases of those incurably victimised being provided for in the meantime, no one would complain that liberty was interfered with, or wish a ball of opium to be brought into our country again. But is it not foolish to speak of liberty when all that is meant by the word is an open gate into a gloomy path from which there can be no return? A moment's liberty that

leads to long slavery is a fine name for a hurtful thing. If such is to be the result, we do not want your Western notions of liberty. Each state should be allowed to choose what it will allow and what it will not allow. Your merchants come as the guests of our empire, and have no right to deal in things which corrupt and impoverish our people. When a guest is received into a house, if he tempts the sons of the house to evil ways, or even to ways out of agreement with the family traditions, it will be no surprise if the master of the house is secretly displeased in spite of his bows and courtesies.

Paul Brown.—But do you think the ministers of State would be willing to forego the revenue?

Brigadier Nang.—I cannot speak for ministers who are often changed, but I know that would be the right course to take, and as the proverb says, "Let good be done for one day, and although prosperity may not have come, disaster will be a long way off." The taste for revenue like that for opium itself is hard to overcome. Some years ago our Government proposed to diminish the production of the drug both at home and in India by gradual

steps which would have led to its entire suppression in twenty years. The English minister, after consulting with the Viceroy of India, did not favour the idea. Your country is not likely to consent to any step which threatens to diminish its revenues, although the change may be necessary for our salvation. We have the reputation of being covetous, but we are prepared for greater sacrifices than you are willing to consider. Your Government, with an Indian head at one end of its body and an English head at the other, looks only to its own officials and the races subject to its sovereignty, knowing no claim of the larger humanity beyond.

Paul Brown.—This is depressing, and bodes no improvement for the future. What is to be the end of it all?

Brigadier Nang.—Perhaps Russia and France, who condemn the opium trade, may agree to set us free, unless they themselves are tempted to compete with you by raising opium in Manchuria and Annam. Or things may go from bad to worse till a new insurrection arises, aiming at the recovery of our moral autonomy rather than of alienated lands. My old leader in Kashgaria, Tso Tsung Tong, thought that

would come to pass. In the meantime, I would recommend to your Indian Government two popular sayings. It might venture to put them on the official seal. I am a soldier and not a literary man, so quote only the classics of the streets. "A man may have fifty palaces, but when he lies down to sleep he cannot cover more than eight feet of his possessions," and "All things are possible for the man who can train himself to eat cabbage stalks."

I could wish the Emperor Shun might rise from the dead and be appointed to govern India, for it is said of him: "He lived in a mean hut, and exercised his strength upon irrigation."

CHAPTER VI

COMPETING RELIGIONS

“He who sins against Heaven has none other to whom he can pray.”—CONFUCIUS.

Cheung Sz Ye (Magistrates' Secretary).—His honour has received a despatch from the prefect, saying that on your way to the coast you must be escorted from one district to another by two soldiers and two Yamun police. The country is disturbed, and he would be sorry if you were robbed or molested whilst in his jurisdiction.

John Smith.—It is very kind of his honour, but it was my intention to stay in one of the inns. I have no fear for myself, and did not wish to impose any trouble upon his staff. I am greatly obliged for his kindness.

Cheung Sz Ye.—But the people hereabouts are lawless and violent, and the message from the prefect is peremptory. Your illustrious occupation is that of preaching the doctrine, I believe?

John Smith.—I am a man of modest parts, and would not dare to take to myself words of praise. I have left my country to teach others truths I have been brought to greatly prize. Having been fifteen years in the province, I travel widely without mishaps.

Cheung Sz Ye.—You speak the local dialect well. If I heard you talking and did not see your face I should take you for a Chinaman from another province. I suppose your sovereign pays you handsomely for this work, and that when you return to your native country rank will be conferred upon you as a reward.

John Smith.—Not at all. I am protected by my country just as it would protect a merchant or a traveller, and my income, which is enough for a plain life, is subscribed for by those who are in the same rank of society as myself, and who feel it a duty to spread the religion of Jesus amongst other nations. Indeed that was what Jesus Himself bade His disciples do, before parting from them.

Cheung Sz Ye.—All the disciples of Jesus could not go to other countries. Those of you who come abroad to preach and scatter books, perhaps seek to atone for your own faults or for those of your forefathers, and to make merit

which will ensure the prosperity of your children.

John Smith.—That is not the idea at all. I of course have my faults like others and pretend to no special sanctity, but faults are not dealt with in the way you imagine. We are all children of one common Heaven, and whatever good we receive, either in body or mind, we must try to share with others. As I view things, China needs the teaching of Jesus. If she is to rise above the corruption and misery which abound like an overflowing flood, and escape a degeneracy your own statesmen lament, she must begin by accepting a new faith.

Cheung Sz Ye.—What is amiss with the three old religions? The Emperor honours them all, and gives high rank to their representatives. The people can find what they need in one or other of these sects. Even missionaries approve of the teachings of Confucius.

John Smith.—The evil of the situation is this, that the common people and the women follow superstitions at which the educated laugh, and the educated themselves do not believe in the more spiritual elements in the Confucian books. If the educated laugh at the

religious beliefs of the uneducated, it is impossible for any form of worship to enlist reverence and uplift the character. Faith must suffer when the poor who profess it are scoffed at by the literary classes who do not profess it.

Cheung Sz Ye.—But I do not see how you are to improve matters by giving us the religion of Jesus. The faith of missionaries is sometimes laughed at by consuls and assistant-consuls, as well as by Englishmen engaged in newspaper work. Did not Confucius say that “True wisdom consists in being sensible of the limitations of one’s own knowledge.” Those surely are wanting in wisdom who speak with certainty of the things treated in the Books of Jesus, things that no one has either seen or heard.

John Smith.—I do not think the sage intended his maxim to be applied in the way you suggest, or he would not have attached so much importance to *The Books of History and Poetry*, which contain fragments of primitive religion precious as gold. At that starting-point we are all in agreement. “King Man, with complete intelligence, watchfully and reverently served God, and so secured the great blessing.” You will be able to quote more correctly than I can the remarkable text about “Man Wong

ascending and descending upon the right and the left hand of God." Such texts remind us of the sacred books of the Jews, where the beginnings of the faith of Jesus are to be found. The early belief in God, so pure and simple, will have to be revived and enlarged. The God worshipped at the altar of Heaven by the Emperor Kwang Sü is mysterious and unknown, but we cannot think he is to remain for ever hidden. Jesus was born to reveal the mystery of God, and to teach us to live in harmony with His will and work. Western doctors say that sometimes a child's intelligence is straitened and defective because the bones which cover the brain grow together too soon and prevent its expansion. The wise and holy faith of ancient times has been imprisoned by an exaggerated ceremonialism, and the excess of ceremonialism breeds ignorance and insincerity.

Cheung Sz Ye.—But it is impossible to have religion without the rites of sacrifice, and such rites often tend to outward and empty show. Perhaps if we were to make Confucianism real, which is our proper and indigenous faith, it would do as much for us as a Western religion, for Western religions do not always make consuls and Customs secretaries, merchants and sailors

mindful of the precepts of the sages. At least I am told so by those who live in the ports. We are not likely to get much further in our knowledge of the Supreme Ruler, for our own commentators are not clear as to what is meant by the name, and it relieves us from any uneasiness of mind to remember that King Man's successors have always continued to worship Him on our behalf.

John Smith.—But is this attempt to shift responsibility upon the emperor good? It is right that his high office should be recognised, but Heaven has given you just as complete a conscience as it has given to the great kings and rulers of earth, and you have quite as sound a title of direct access to Heaven as they. You have not been made half a man or three-quarters of a man only, but a complete man, and although the subject may not be as much qualified to rule as the sovereign and his ministers, he is as much qualified to worship. The people, when they do not worship the Supreme Ruler, who is known to be holy, righteous, and impartial, fall to the worship of gods who are supposed to favour them in their wrong-doings and animosities. Thieves, insurrectionists, murderers, all have their gods in whose name they execute their

crimes. It was only last week I saw an old woman who had drawn a rough picture of her adversary, which she placed before the idol, and, after burning crackers and presenting offerings, she asked the idol to smite her enemy, and with each petition struck the portrait of the neighbour she had spread on the ground before her.

Cheung Sz Ye.—That is ignorance, and perhaps there may be something of the same temper in countries where the Supreme Ruler only is worshipped.

John Smith.—But no one would pray in that way who read what Jesus taught about the character of the Supreme Ruler. Besides, it is impossible to defend a condition of society in which the educated worship one god, and the uneducated and the lawless worship other gods of their own choosing.

Cheung Sz Ye.—Perhaps revenge-seekers, robbers, and assassins think their cause is righteous, so that they are entitled to the help of the gods. Men do not always know themselves, and that may even happen in Western countries. To change one's gods is no cure for self-deception. It is said that the rich and powerful people of Western countries always

think that God is on their side and against the other people. At any rate, we are good-humoured towards all religions which are in agreement with the law and encourage domestic virtue.

John Smith.—But the fits of persecution which come over both people and officials at fixed intervals do not seem to exemplify a tolerant temper, although many officials, like your honourable magistrate, and people of all classes, do sometimes show boundless kindness.

Cheung Sz Ye.—We do not as a rule trouble to examine the religion of the foreigners, and neither hate nor favour it. Some of its principles are the same as are contained in our own books, but its histories are strange to us, whilst the names with which the Old and New Testaments open make us laugh. We have our own histories, of the genuineness of which we are able to judge for ourselves. What we mistrust and dislike is the men who profess your religion. I am afraid I drop the rules of politeness in saying so; but there is an unconfessed antipathy of blood between us. Our people do not think of Western races as of the same species. We have never suppressed any religion in the past unless the followers of it

have practised cruel rites and been licentious in their conduct. We have been so magnanimous that we have absorbed the Jews who settled in our midst, so that by intermarriage and in other ways they have become one body with us—a feat which I am told neither Russia nor Germany has yet rivalled. A few years ago, when his honour was in office near Hoi Fung Fu, and I was in his suite, two foreigners came into the neighbourhood to inquire after “the sect that draws out the sinew.” They might as well have sought for a last year’s Tsaidam snow-storm in the floods of the Yellow River. The sect had melted away into our guilds and clans and families, and could no longer be traced. Mahomedans we leave to do as they like in religion, unless they are disloyal and foment rebellion, as has happened more than once in Kam Suk and Ili. Their mosques are as safe against riot as the temples of the God of War or of the City God. When the Arabs came to our coasts a thousand years ago, the emperor appointed a Mahomedan mandarin to deal with their affairs. Members of that sect have lived amongst us undisturbed for generations, have a place in the ward-motes, and become in-

corporate with the city life, some even filling high posts in the civil and military service of the empire. It is true the Emperor Shun Chi put down the Dutch, Italian, and Portuguese missionaries, but his policy was caused by the fact that their meddlesome and masterful tempers had become hard to bear with, and our rulers were losing their liberty, and suffering treatment on their own soil like that of slaves. These men came as guests to the empire and to the Court, and at last began to act as host, and give orders in another's house. And in some of the later troubles, missionaries, if not paid and sent by their Governments, received seals of office, empowering them to enter into the mandarins' courts and negotiate the affairs of their converts. Sometimes they have ventured to browbeat our magistrates as though the appointments of the Middle Kingdom were held at the will of foreign sovereigns. And even when no such things were done, the missionaries introduced others into the inland districts, and superintendents of coal mines, railway-route surveyors, and many kinds of drifting foreigners followed in their steps. By compelling us to interfere with the historic independence of clans, guilds, and ward-motes,

consuls were little by little pushing us to the verge of insurrection. If we have sometimes been violent, that is because we have been driven out of our normal tolerance by the obstinate enforcement of treaties. A costly feast may be put in order upon the table, but if the viands are forced down the throats of the guests with bamboo sticks, they will wish to vomit, and suspect the host of a design to poison them.

John Smith.—But the use of force is with the other side. Some few months ago the people in a village I sometimes visit burned down the house of a Christian, because he would not worship idols. He had made money in foreign trade and had helped his neighbours. But at last there was an epidemic of swine cholera, and although there were gamblers and opium-smokers in the place, they put the blame upon this particular man, and said the idols were angry because of the way in which he slighted them.

Cheung Sz Ye.—Well, of course, that was their ignorance. But if a man lives in a village and belongs to the collective clan-life of the place, he is bound to do what the authorities of the families require. I daresay it is easier

for you to act separately in the religious worship you choose to follow, although it is said that in trying to put down the pestilence in India, you forced the people to do things against their religious traditions, and at that time strangers interfered in the family life to an extent our own fathers, uncles, and grandfathers would never attempt or permit in our homes.

John Smith.—But that is what medical science requires, and the science is absolutely true. It is done to preserve the health and life of an entire community.

Cheung Sz Ye.—But in the judgment of those village elders, the house of the disciple of Jesus was burnt in what they believed to be the interests of the community.

John Smith.—Does not that show that the village sorely needed better instruction than it had hitherto received? Such a course would not have commended itself to Confucius, judging him at least from some of his memorable sayings. But I forbear to press that side of the argument. You are an official, and pride yourself on loyalty to the throne. If the emperor is “father and mother of the people,” even the clan patriarchs should obey his edicts, which declare that since Christianity inculcates

morality and good works, its followers must not be persecuted.

Cheung Sz Ye.—Certainly. But if a father is driven to bid a child do something against his own secret will, he will think the child both filial and sagacious, if the child disobey the letter of the father's injunction, and do what will be inwardly more pleasing. All edicts are not spontaneous. In the past, many have thought that the emperor and his ministers would be best pleased if little or no favour was shown to the foreigners. It is said that with many Englishmen the country stands first and the teaching of the sacred books second. Will the nations over the seas never understand we do not want a foreign religion?

John Smith.—But flowers and fruits from other lands have become acclimatised in China, and you no longer think of them as foreign, although in some cases there is a ring of the foreign sound in the Chinese names. Western nations no longer think of their religion as of foreign origin, although it is one of the religions of the East and not of the West. A religion becomes the religion of the man who professes it, when he shares its living virtues and practises its teachings. The Truth is of no

particular race or country. That is what Paul taught, who was the most noted disciple of Jesus.

Cheung Sz Ye.—If that is so, why do foreigners thrust their strange buildings upon us, and make common people feel they take away their luck by disturbing the “fung-shui”? Temples for the worship of Jesus could be built like those of Kun Yam or T’in Hau. To make religious buildings and the forms of worship copy what is foreign, is as bad as compelling converts to cut off their queues and wear European clothes.

John Smith.—But such things are accidents, and perhaps missionaries, not sufficiently understanding the likes and dislikes of the Chinese, make many mistakes. The religion of Jesus can prosper without public buildings of any kind. It was first preached in houses; after it had once begun to spread in new countries its rites were practised in caves and rock-tombs, and for two centuries it had no public temples.

Cheung Sz Ye.—It could not do that in China. Missionaries are too assertive to be content with such quiet methods, for it is their boast that they belong to the ruling races of the world. Yours is a less domestic religion than Confucianism, and

because it is dissatisfied with the average sentiments of human life, needs public demonstrations to give it strength and prosperity. Moreover, secret societies are always suspected amongst us. We organise family instincts into motive forces of action, and direct them into worship. The religion of Jesus, as far as I have read, seems to be made up of conjectures about God and dreams of a future life; and dreams come and go whilst man's natural instincts always remain. The dreams may be true or untrue, but they do not supply stable and effective reasons for action. Now and again a man goes on a pilgrimage, becomes a vegetarian, or presents new gold-leaf to adorn the Buddhas of a monastery, because he has been moved by a dream, but nine men out of ten act because they have thought of something when awake. Our trade has a sacredness lacking in yours, for its motive is the better fulfilment of the duties of filial piety and brotherhood, and the end to which it looks is the ancestral temple. The motive of your trade is a grand house in London or New York and the sweet wine with bubbles in it, such as is given to our officials when they make Queen's birthday calls at the Consulates.

John Smith.—Yes, but the instinct for God is just as much a part of human nature as that for parents and brothers, and lasts as long. And Confucianism in its modern forms does not despise the dream. Ancestral worship, as popularly held, assumes a fact which the mere senses cannot know—the immortality of the soul. It is because of that underlying belief that those who are now living hope to be solaced after their decease by the worship of posterity. To assume the continued existence of the soul after death without a Divine soul which upholds it, is less credible than the teaching of Jesus upon this subject. Every religion has to reinforce the sense of duty with those ideas which you call dreams, and Confucianism never scruples to make use of them. In all your habits and movements do you not consider the wishes of your ancestry and believe that you can often find out what those wishes are? How often do you try to dissuade men from evil courses by asking them how they can meet the spirits of their forefathers? You keep a professional class of sorcerers, necromancers, and “fung-shui” experts, who are supposed to interpret the tastes and dispositions of the dead. Is it not a more reasonable thing to try and

find out what God is from the conscience which your Doctrine of the Mean declares is of Divine origin. "Man's moral nature is constituted by the mandate of Heaven." A moral nature so constituted is surely as trustworthy in its intimations as the professional diviners to whom you resort. Conscience asks no fees when it gives its instructions, and at least is disinterested. The religion of Jesus is in agreement at every point with the moral nature man has received from Heaven, and presents a rational interpretation of the facts of the spiritual world. It is not necessary to do violence to one's intellect by believing in Jesus. In fact, the sacredness of life is only felt amongst the nations which accept the Christian doctrine of immortality.

Cheung Sz Ye.—But it is said that Western nations have a feebler sense of the sacredness of life than some years ago. They certainly sacrifice life for objects we should not think of sufficient importance. In some countries it is said that every man has to be a soldier, and wars are waged because of the private quarrels of princes and statesmen. Governments spend lives more recklessly than they spend silver and gold, and when they cease to

waste lives it is because they wish to cease wasting silver and gold.

John Smith.—Such statements are made at times, but they are unfriendly exaggerations. At the same time, I must confess that the delight in pictures of war does tend to make men think death a trifle, especially when religious faith is not strong. But this bears out my argument, for the declining sense of the sacredness of life is associated with the decay of religious belief.

Cheung Sz Ye.—Then I am to infer you come to offer us a dying religion, just as the farmer when his plough-buffalo dies, cuts it up for cheap beef and sells it to his neighbours. Our religion of family sentiment, which does not decay, might be useful to you in recovering your lost sense of the sacredness of life. It is our homage to family affection and fidelity which has saved us from the war craze, for some Eastern nations have been just as notorious for the love of war as France, Germany, and Russia. Perhaps our religion is easier than yours, because a child's earliest feelings of duty are towards his parents, and here lies the root of all other virtues. The root lives when the flower dies. It must be

parent first, and God, who is more remote and obscure, in the uncertain after-time, if He needs to be worshipped at all. Most Chinamen are content to leave that deep and mysterious function of sacrifice to the emperor.

John Smith.—In the first place let me say the Christian religion is as imperishable as the conscience itself, because it more fully expresses all that the conscience contains, and whilst we recognise the sacredness of the family affections, they derive their sacredness from the God who ordains and inspires them. He is the root of the root and the beginning of the beginning. For a time, perhaps, in the early growth of a child, the parent must be in the place of God, and the faculties through which the parent is seen unfold before the faculties through which God is felt and known. God's care begins before that of the parent is possible, and His claim is paramount. But the succession in the steps of growth is no key to the relative value of various human obligations. It is said that a babe's sense of smell begins to act before its other senses. Would you therefore say the sense of smell is the most sacred of all the senses, and the babe must be trained into a hunting-dog, and its other senses ought to take an

inferior place. We teach a child reverence, and the instincts of a child desire a larger object of worship, and at last turn to that which is infinite. But my argument is needless, for a Chinese child who can only just toddle, is taught to prostrate himself before idols, as well as before ancestors, living and dead. The duty of filial piety can scarcely be used as the basis of a universal religion, because its incidence is unequal. How can a child rightly worship a parent who forsakes or ill-treats him. I know you quote the example of Shun and others, who set themselves to recover unworthy parents, but they had other elements of religion beyond those which they drew from the family. How can a child, brought up in a foundling house, and sold at last for a slave or something worse, cherish the principle of filial piety? One of the reasons China has stopped in its progress, and has been for centuries like a man sleeping by the wayside, is that its ideals are in the past. When we worship that which is no higher than ourselves, imagination shrinks like a man in whom the nutritive functions have been suspended by opium, and the well-being of the race becomes limited by the standards of a rude antiquity.

Cheung Sz Ye.—But if filial piety cannot be the basis of a universal religion, can you find the promise of anything better in the teaching and worship of Jesus? If there are classes in our midst we are compelled to regard as reprobate, are there no corresponding classes in Western countries?

John Smith.—Our faith leads us to look upon all classes with hope; the message we teach announces God's good-will to the worst men and women of our cities; and as a matter of fact, the best people in the churches are often drawn from classes of society other religions regard as hopeless.

Cheung Sz Ye.—If you still have vicious classes left that seems to imply your religion promises more than ours, without making good its word. Large portions of Western cities are reputed to be as bad or worse than our streets of gambling and opium-huts. It is said nothing can be sadder or more degrading than the "samshoo"-shops of foreign ports. Visitors who come back from the West say Tām Ch'ī need not go into the world of shades to see the halls of purgatory and their ghastly shows. Those with the taste for such episodes can cross the sea and visit melancholy cities where smoke and

cloud never disperse. The rich manufacturers of beer and spirits are the Yamas who preside over these places of torture, and they wear costly robes and many gems. If we look upon certain classes as reprobate by birth, Western countries take the same view, and announce it under another name. When the doctrine of Jesus fails to save men from their vices, they are spoken of as insane, and the wish is expressed to shut them up in mad-houses.

John Smith.—Men's diseases of soul are the same everywhere, and the religion of Jesus is effectual, not so much in preventing those ills which arise in all countries alike, but in saving those who have any desire to be saved. In spite of the fact that men are made with minds which compel them to approve of what is good they tend towards evil paths. We bring men out of vice and make them respectable citizens, although it must be allowed, at the present temptations are so strong, that others from the virtuous classes lapse from virtue and go down into the mire to take their places.

Cheung Sz Ye.—Perhaps by a wise use of the natural forms of authority we prevent as many from going down into vice as your religion saves when they have drifted there. Our

religion is therefore valuable for prevention and yours for cure. From your admissions, it seems as though society with you were akin to that which the Buddhists depict in the world of shades. Bad men come crowding in to take the places of those who have been sufficiently chastened for their offences, and as the wheel of transmigration turns in the last court of the series, souls are sent forth to new embodiments in which the old combinations of character repeat themselves, without permanent improvement or amelioration.

John Smith.—I do not accept that as a true picture of what is coming to pass in Western countries. There have been great improvements within my life-time, and I believe that the evil which still remains will one day vanish. A sick man on the way to recovery is often better and worse, and better again on successive days.

Cheung Sz Ye.—Some periods are less disorderly than others, but they do not last. It has been so in our own history. Manners became lax, and restlessness and insubordination spread through the empire for a time, and then there is a return to virtue. But in the end the world continues what it was, and the kind of

religion it follows may not be a matter of vital importance.

John Smith.—In countries where the truth of Jesus is accepted and practised, if a long term of years is brought into account, improvement is seen to be continuous. All decline in prosperity is to be explained by the decline of religious faith.

Cheung Sz Ye.—It perhaps is so. You will find the road to the next city has ups and downs, and when you get there to-morrow night you will be on the same level as when you start in the morning. And the movements of religion follow the same rule. But the third watch is being sounded and we have talked long. I hope I have not offended you by my rough and fiery disputings. The kitchen boy will show you to your room. Our sleeping apartments are mean, and not so spacious and stately as those foreigners are accustomed to occupy. May you sleep well! If you hear any noises in the night, you need have no fear, The rats in this part of the country are devoid of shyness, but they will only steal the oil out of the lamp saucer. May you sleep well!

CHAPTER VII

A CHINESE APPRECIATION OF THE NEW IMPERIALISM

“He who rules by virtue is like the pole-star which keeps its position in the heavens whilst all the stars turn to it.”—CONFUCIUS.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—In this skirmish with the Dutch settlers of Africa, the luck of your esteemed country seems to have turned. We are comrades in misfortune, and I make my bow of condolence. Some time ago, when you paid me the honour of a call, our relations with Japan had been troubled, and you not only smiled at the drill and equipment of our army, but spoke as though our battle-ships, which had cost millions of taels and had been built under the best foreign direction, were little better than a fleet of salt-junks. In speaking of your honourable Government I would not be rude or forget the proprieties, but although the prestige of the English Navy may be high, the

field army, allowing, of course, for differences between the East and the West, does not seem to accomplish much more than our own.

Gideon Khakison.—With all due respect to your Excellency, I cannot agree to that comparison. Our officers are men of science, brave, and upright, and as to the private soldier, everybody is loud in his praise.

Wong Chiu Yeung. — Your merchants, especially those of the old school, are men of integrity, but the caterers for the Commissariat must surely have served an apprenticeship under Chinese masters in the art of “squeeze pidgin,” at Shanghai or Peking. We are flattered by the many details in which you have consented to imitate us. When Tso Tsung Tong set out with his army to put down Mahomedan rebels in Kashgaria, having neither ships nor railways to carry his stores, he halted his troops for six months at a time, so that they could sow seed and reap harvests. He was patient, and did not allow himself to be starved into retreat. In the later stages of this campaign, if one may believe the Shanghai newspapers, it looks as though your generals might be shut up to the same line of tactics. Perhaps we could lend you a few survivors from that

memorable expedition who might take charge of the Commissariat. Those Dutch farmers are as hardy and cunning as Mongols, and mount a horse as well. English and German counsellors tell us we must have a new standing army, if the integrity of the empire is to be maintained, but we are beginning to doubt whether these new-fangled armies are of much account after all.

Gideon Khakison.—Your Excellency is witty, and perhaps not altogether fair in judging the course of events. In my humble country a civilisation prevails which is more deft in its methods and humane in its motives than that which has so long established itself in China, your ministers of state, who have come as envoys to Europe, freely admitting this. If our generals have blundered and been held at bay by a handful of stubborn agriculturists, at least they have at their service the benefits of a science which is peculiar to the West. Never before in the history of the world have ten times ten thousand men been carried across the sea in a month or two at the most, and placed face to face with a distant enemy. We are proud of our sun-mirror telegraphs, of the cars raised into the clouds by gas-bags from which the enemy's position can be observed, and of the guns which

hit with exact aim objects unseen by the artillerymen, and, most of all, of the courage and sacrifice of our common soldiers. But what best deserves the study and imitation of Eastern nations is the compassion of our hospital work, which is a direct fruit of the religion of Jesus. We pity and heal our enemies, nursing them as though they had been wounded on our own side, and such acts are not common where the work and character of Jesus are unknown.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—That is so, assuredly, and does not need to be argued. The missionaries make pity the chief virtue in both the Supreme Ruler and His worshippers. You are masters there, and we are humble learners at your door. But tactics and invention are not always proof of superiority in disposition and conduct. The fox is cleverer than the meek, obedient creature which ploughs our fields. It is not easy to understand the men of the West, for they do not know their own minds, and are divided by conflicting ideas. The oldest son of a family becomes a military mandarin, and invents torpedoes and poison-gas guns, feeling as happy as a faery when he has discovered some new combination in chemistry by which he can kill men, a trenchful at a time. The

second son of the same father and mother is sent to learn surgery, and with knife, probe, and other instruments, performs those feats in which you are pre-eminent, thinking he has deserved the highest fame if he can heal seventy per cent. of the men his brother has been trying to kill. And the youngest son becomes a padre, and prays for peace in the temple of a city where they weld steel guns, roll armour-plate, and make rifles, and the very people who join in his prayers would starve if the prayers were answered. And he will tell those who hear him preach, not to kill men unless they are Hollanders, and can be killed in squads and battalions. And with these three sons, the second of whom undoes the work of the first, whilst the third discredits his calling, the father is equally pleased, and praises them all as models of filial piety. We might hope to understand you if you were all soldiers, or all doctors, or all padres, but these contradictions amaze us.

Gideon Khakison.—These three occupations are not so contradictory as your Excellency seems to think. Sooner or later fighting has to be done, and if it is right at all, it is right to carry it through thoroughly, so that the misery may be short and the lesson lasting. And when

men have been overthrown in battle, our religion teaches that we must not slake our vengeance in the torture of the fallen. Justice ought to be tempered with mercy. And as to praying for peace, most men think that the human race would be happier and more prosperous if war could be abolished. We all favour that idea, and call together councils of various nations to see how it can be brought to pass. The inconsistency in the three sons of one family, chosen for your illustration, is on the surface, and their inward motives are not so antagonistic as their apparent acts.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—If we had been born foreigners, perhaps we might understand these ideas better. To reconcile such divergent pursuits is like trying to put together a puzzle when the pieces have been made to a different scale, and thrown in a heap at random. The ways of the men of the Great Pure dynasty are less perplexing, because they have been trained in the doctrine of Confucius, which he asserted to be that “of an all-pervading unity.” It is true our surgery is that of an early age, and the doctors of the present time are not so much honoured as yours. We are cautious, for, as we are taught in our classics, “the cautious seldom

err." In this, as in other things, we move slowly. The Chinaman is more patient under pain than the men of the West, recovering without much care. Judged by European methods, our army may be loose, decrepit, ineffectual, for it does not cost much, and we do not want it to kill men in large numbers. It absorbs as much money and is quite as deadly as either Confucius or Mencius would have approved. If the precepts of these wise men, who lived centuries before Jesus, had been known and respected in the countries of the West, both English and Dutch would have been kept out of this gold-mine "bobbery," about which everybody is talking. Of course our armaments are as old-fashioned as the pikes and coats of mail for horses and men which my nephew saw in London in Jubilee year; but even those would have been sufficient to defend your empire, big as it is, if the maxims of our early sages were learned and honoured by your scholars. Our weapons and our drill, about which Lord Beresford laughed so politely when he was visiting us, do at least prove that our people have learned to follow out those ideas, of which the empire governed by the Son of Heaven has been built up. It is evident

that the bigger it is necessary to make the army, the poorer is the stock of ideas through which order and morality are secured in the homes of the people; and the more influential the stock of ethical ideas, the more insignificant will armies tend to become. If our native soldiery is unequal to a contest with the fierce warriors of the West, who move as though they were spokes in the wheel of a paddle-boat, and fight by launching meteors and thunder-bolts at their foes, it is sufficient at least for the preservation of peace within the eighteen provinces. Some reforms, it is true, are needed, and mandarins ought not to be left to pay themselves by fees and exactions, but if under a defective scheme of administration the people continue prosperous and contented, that proves they govern themselves. The mandarins touch them with a light hand, unless critical emergencies compel them to do otherwise. Our populations are fused into coherence by loyalty, mutual good-will, and strong family sentiments; and lacking these things, not all the armies of Europe, said to number as many as the adults in a Chinese province, could hold together our busy multitudes. Our institutions, which continue like mountains the floods cannot reach when

dynasties rise and fall, safeguard the interests of all classes of the people. Our sacred books, old as yours, and equally honoured, encourage and extol the instincts which find expression in an organised family life ; and the tens of millions who bow to Confucius as master, are in warp and woof as much of a texture as a roll of pongee silk. In your scattered empire it is rumoured you have no common literature, no uniform worship, no unalterable standard of family life ; and an empire in whose homes there is no mutual, unifying attraction, of course needs military force to hold it together. Your promiscuous territories have as little stability as the trees, fortresses, and city gates of painted wood in our open-air theatres, which are kept in position by attendants on the stage whilst the actors recite. Perhaps your statesmen are right when they say there must be the strong upholding hand in every part of the world where the flag flies. Our cult of filial piety guards the family against dispersion, our classical learning is a legacy in which every hamlet has its stake, and our civilisation, although you think it a skeleton of the past, does at least preserve the close coherence distinctive of the primitive tribe, and knits together hundreds of millions as

closely as the first groups of families were compacted under Iu and Shun.

Gideon Khakison.—But is there no truth in the rumour that the weakness of China's military defences is due to the avarice and neglect of her officials, rather than to zeal for the peace doctrine of the ancient sages? Has not each city its temple dedicated to the God of War, who was a valiant general in the times of the Three States? Does not the *Book of Odes* speak of Mō Wong, the founder of the Chau dynasty, who did his fair share of fighting, and soldier of fortune though he was, is still spoken of as one of the model kings of antiquity?

Wong Chiu Yeung.—The age is sometimes disorderly, and violent characters arise who must be punished. How can the punishment of confederated crime be accomplished without military force? The campaigns spoken of with complacency in the Classics are always described as acts of "chastisement" approved by the public conscience. The wild men who were not submissive to our doctrine have retired into the mountains. Military fanatics, such as Ts'un Ch'i Wong, who tried to revolutionise our ancient institutions by destroying the Confucian

literature and oppressing the scholars, have always been execrated. We do not worship such as these, at least if their warfare had conquest for its object. Mongols and Mantchoos, who overcame us and took possession of the empire, only maintained their position by conforming to our customs. They conquered our provinces with the sword, and we in our turn conquered them, without shedding of blood, by our arts, letters, and the spirit of our family life; and they are now devoted to our institutions, and jealously guard the doctrine of the sages. It is by a process of peaceful assimilation that our race has spread itself from its first area between the Yellow River and the Yang Tsze, through eighteen provinces. The territory now included within our frontiers has not been wholly overspread by races which have multiplied from one stock only. We have incorporated races which have admired our teaching and customs, and have wished to intermarry with us, and have not driven them out. In the Chinamen of the north, the south, and the west, the strain of neighbouring races with which our settlers intermarried may be traced, and in some of the local dialects words occur which no one can trace back to the early

books. The spread of our race has been determined not by weapons but by the admiration felt for our doctrine of the family and for the arts of our civilisation. Nothing but a cruel necessity has led us to wage wars of extermination even against savages. In fact, the doctrine of filial piety prevents the popularity of war more effectually than either the cost of armaments or the teaching of Jesus amongst the rich and half-believing nations of Europe.

Gideon Khakison.—I agree with your Excellency that China is peaceful in its traditions, and, as all who know the people can testify, that they are quiet, industrious and easy to govern. Riot and violence are rare, and occur only when false rumours are circulated to incite the ignorant. The Chinaman is not perfect, but he loves his home, cherishes his children with kindness, and is too much occupied to be a political busy-body. The teaching and the institutions of his country have schooled him into many profitable virtues ; but I cannot see that the influences hitherto at work have produced the highest types of character. Do not think me wanting in veneration for those whom you justly esteem if I venture to say Christian countries have again and again

produced less faulty saints than Confucius, and as to his seventy-two disciples, good men though they were, many a little English town could supply a list of equally good men, without ranging the country through to find them. It is a wonderful wheel which has ground these dense myriads to such reputable sameness of mind and character, and the process has been patient and long sustained. But the highest ethical finish is wanting. Pardon my narrowness for thinking so, and venturing to speak my mind. You say that foreigners are blunt, and I take advantage of your opinion in that matter.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—You fail, sir, to feel the spirit of our literature and the true worth of our many virtues. Perhaps the reason is, western men nibble at our books when they are approaching middle life, and do not feast on them as boys, for warm appreciation is rare. “Mysterious is the intelligence of the sage. He nurtures and transforms all things, and is the equal of Heaven.” The antipathy such a statement calls forth is a proof that you only skim our literature. I would go to your metropolis and disseminate the political economy taught by our two greatest masters, if I were freed from office, and had not the great duty of watching

over the last days of my parents. I should make as many converts as the missionaries, if I were to rent a hall in one of your wealthy centres, for many of your people have leisure and are always ready to hear the voice of virtue and conciliation, especially if the voice is that of a stranger. Or perhaps the better plan would be to conciliate the scholars first, for you missionaries seem to invert the appointed order of working. Our sages teach that "the rulers are like the wind and the people are like the grass, and that the grass bends as the wind blows." By approaching the poorest of the people first, you are trying to make the grass direct the wind, instead of letting the wind sway the grass. The political maxims of ancient China might be made the subject of an examination for those who are about to become judges, magistrates, revenue-officers, and consuls. The Government would not care for the officers of the Army and Navy to devote themselves to this branch of study, lest they should be dissuaded from entering upon their profession, and esteem its honours inferior.

King Wai of Leung was once bewailing to Mencius defeats in war and loss of territory. That wise and liberal friend of the people

replied: "With a territory only thirty miles square in extent it is possible to attain the suzerainty. If your Majesty will confer a benevolent administration upon the people, making penalties rare, taxation easy, and leaving your subjects sufficient leisure for the cultivation of filial and fraternal pieties, you will be able to send your people armed only with sticks to resist the mail and the sharp weapons of Ts'un and Ch'o; for the rulers of those states steal their people's time, so that the fields are neglected and their families famished and scattered abroad. In accord with this anticipation is the popular saying, 'The benevolent has no enemy.' I beg your Majesty not to be in two minds about this."

When asked by the son of the same king, "How can the empire be settled?" Mencius said, "By being united under one sway."

"And who can so unite it?"

"He who has no pleasure in killing men can so unite it."

"Who can give it to him?"

"All the people of the empire will give it to him without a dissentient voice. The shepherds of men throughout the empire all take pleasure in killing men. If there were one who did not

find pleasure in killing men, all the people in the empire would look towards him with outstretched necks."

To King Sun of Ts'ai he said, "If your Majesty will institute a Government whose acts are benevolent, it will make all the officers in the empire wish to stand in your Majesty's Courts, all the farmers wish to plough in your Majesty's fields, all the merchants wish to store their goods in your Majesty's market-places, and all plaintiffs who cannot obtain justice at home to have the opportunity of appealing to your justice."

"Let benevolent government be exercised in a country of ten thousand chariots, and the people will be delighted with it, as if they were relieved from hanging by the heels."

"A ruler who honours talent, makes taxation easy, and accepts labour in place of tithes from the husbandmen, will be looked upon by neighbouring kingdoms as though he were a parent. Such a ruler will not have an enemy in the empire, and he who has no enemy in the empire is the minister of Heaven."

"If good men were to govern a country in succession for a hundred years, they would be

able to transform the violently bad, and to abolish capital punishments."

In India and other countries, where you have had the opportunity of dealing with subject-races, have your rulers justified themselves by the axiomatic test of the sage? Directly or indirectly, you have had a century for the experiment. Our sage must be wrong or your administrators have not reached his standard of excellence. It is said that instead of lightening the penalties for some offences, you try to make them heavier, and if you did not awe the people now and again by military pageants and campaigns, you fear your dynasty would pass away.

Gideon Khakison.—These aphorisms of your early sages do credit to their kind-heartedness, but sometimes were they not over sanguine in their views? Your Excellency will probably agree with me that these classic precepts, after all, are too good for practice. As to our Government of India, the country has far fewer soldiers than when it was under native rulers, and fewer lives are sacrificed by fighting or violence. The evidence of my assertion is that the population increases in an unexampled ratio. Your reproach of our Indian Govern-

ment will embolden me for a criticism of things I see here. The squabbles and skirmishes amongst the disciples of Confucius are as many as those which occur in kingdoms across the sea ; but fighting resembles your industrial production ; it is a domestic craft carried out on a small scale, and you lack the machinery for wholesale enterprises. Clan fights, guild fights, fights between men of different provinces, who make their club-houses serve for fortress and barracks, may be seen in one place or another any day of the month. And as to your frontier tribes, you have been skirmishing with them, off and on, for three thousand years, and the play is not finished yet.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Does not that show how patient and forbearing we are? Perhaps we may have to learn from Christian nations the art of “putting this business through,” and “fighting to a finish.” I think those are the phrases your statesmen use. As to our brushes with frontier tribes, they occur on the thinly settled outskirts of the empire, and bear no higher proportion to the myriads of our central and seaboard provinces than the wine-shop fights in Western countries bear to the number of people there. Do you not think it is greatly

to our credit that we have not exterminated them after such a long period of time by the rifle, strong drink, opium, and loathsome diseases?

Gideon Khakison.—If you have spared them you have done less to improve their lot than we have done to improve the lot of those within our influence. The churches at least have meant well by the vanishing tribes, however much they may have suffered from traders. And the wars of Christian nations are less fierce and savage than the wars of nations which are not Christian. The teaching of Mencius is admirable, but probably the most cruel and devastating war of the century has been the war you waged to put down the T'ae P'ings. It is computed, that in the course of twenty years you slaughtered as many millions of men as we have slaughtered hundreds in the course of this tedious and unlucky war. Counsels of perfection, preached by the philosophers of the past and present-day practice do not always agree; and yet I must allow these peace theories are held in wonderfully high esteem, considering their long neglect. Perhaps the wisdom of those utterances will not be neglected by our posterity.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—As to the T'ae P'ing rebellion, your honourable country, which feared the loss of trade, encouraged us in the suppression of it, and sent one of its ablest soldiers to advise and assist. The greater part of our fighting under the present dynasty is done by Tartar soldiers, and our people have fits of martial temper only when they begin to chafe under the yoke of oppressors. The masses are leavened by the example and doctrine of Confucius, who, when Duke Ling wished to discuss military matters with him, "took his departure next day."

Gideon Khakison.—Your Excellency was scarcely serious when you spoke just now of a winsome assimilation as the secret of empire, and not feats of the sword and a policy of conquest. That China is the most populous country in the world, and that its populations conform to one type, is a fact that admits of no dispute. At the same time, assimilation by either moral influence, or by force applied more or less violently, has its disadvantages. It tends to make life somewhat monotonous and uninteresting. What in your judgment have been the factors in the process which has built up an empire of unexampled magnitude, and

made hundreds of millions of Chinamen as much alike as two blades of grass on the hillside?

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Confucius made the virtues of the home the root of all government. If you compact men into families where mutual reverence and fidelity are passions, the families will compact themselves into kingdoms. With us the domestic sentiment is invincible, and it gets much of its strength from that worship of ancestors which you brand as superstitious and hurtful to the worship of the Supreme. The generations are linked to each other, and with the soil into which the bodies of our forefathers have been given back and blended. In Hong-Kong or Shanghai a foreigner who has children by a Chinese wife or concubine, when he goes back with his savings to his native land, leaves a few hundred taels with a lawyer or with a friend for the support of his offspring, and never wishes to see this branch of his family again. That is not the prevailing custom in foreign life, but it is the part of foreign life many Chinamen see most of. We have a saying that "those who do not recognise the ties which identify the different generations with each other, are like cattle in clothes." "Cattle in clothes" can scarcely organise

themselves into kingdoms. Mixed alliances are unseemly and inexpedient, but in similar circumstances, a Chinese father is never ashamed of his own offspring. A second factor which has made for the unity of the empire, is that the Confucian literature, in which we are all steeped, draws the thought and feeling of the whole empire into correspondence, as musical instruments follow the pitch-pipe. Our rulers rarely court insurrection by attacking those forms of self-government which have the sanction of antiquity in city and village alike, and they make it their policy to strengthen, rather than undermine, the independence of the family councils. For this reason the empire can survive dynastic change, and, though wasted for a time, is never destroyed by revolution. We rule ourselves, and the lawlessness is perhaps less than amongst other races. When you conquer, you assume that every existing institution is a stronghold of rebels, and in your colonies this primitive exercise of power within the guild and the family is made a crime. Chinese secret societies you dread, as though they were the caves of bandits and assassins, but nine Englishmen out of ten do not know a secret society from those councils of parents and

kinsmen, whose prerogatives have been respected and upheld by every Chinese dynasty. Western Governments give no special powers to the aged. If we have not trial by jury, it is because the participation of the people in the administration of justice has never been taken away by tyrants. Our people are not trampled down like dirt, as you assume. It is no part of my duty to give advice to missionaries, but their work would meet with more favour, if they did not treat their converts as though they were little children. By assuming that the Chinese are not sufficiently wise and strong to administer their own affairs, you destroy the sense of mutual responsibility. The churches are presumably pure as far as a foreigner can see; but a Chinaman can see further. Men never keep a law they are not allowed to apply to others, and they keep it all the better when, with due safeguards, they take a turn in enforcing it. Sooner or later, every Chinaman becomes a justice of the peace over his own children and grandchildren and his younger brothers also. Such arrangements school men into virtue, and to ignore their place and part in society is to drive men into wrong paths and to divide, rather than to unite, the empire. I do not know whether your rulers have always

recognised this principle. With us empire does not mean the dangerous rigidity which is produced by martial law, but a supple autonomy that can fit itself to varying tastes and requirements. As the proverb goes, "The soft tongue outlives the hard teeth." One of our sages said, "Get the hearts of the people and the empire is got," but you will never win any hearts by taking away power from the virtuous.

Gideon Khakison.—It is a mistake to speak as though the religion of Jesus slighted the family graces and made light of the authority of parents, for it has created the best home life to be found in the world. Moreover, it is the special glory of my humble country that it gives a larger measure of liberty and independence to subject peoples than is ever conceded elsewhere. No difference of race, colour, or class is observed in the administration of the law, and the humblest man can get redress for his injuries. The result of this tradition of equality is that blood feuds and murders of revenge have almost ceased. The sum of money paid by our Government for the liberation of slaves is everywhere spoken of in terms of praise.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Foreign countries are rich, and pay their judges and magistrates so

well, that they do not need to receive the gifts of those who seek the help of their courts. Merchants in Hong-Kong and Singapore praise the impartial justice exercised there, and invest money with the assurance that it will not be confiscated by the officials. Yet clean-handed as your officials are, my countrymen would rather settle their own affairs. And your doctrine of political equality, as you said just now of the peace doctrines of our sages, sets forth what ought to be rather than what actually is. Your tolerance even has its drawbacks. You allow the practice of all religions alike, and you wink also at the public vices which are condemned by all those religions in common. To tolerate a religion, and then to publicly affront its first principles, is the topsy-turvy kind of performance we look for in foreigners. Your philanthropies are grand, especially to races of alien blood, but are exercised with a coldness of demeanour which makes the benefits conferred unwelcome. Whilst the Chinaman is proud, and that is an infirmity common also to other races, there is no caste in the Middle Kingdom. The *esprit de corps* in family and clan keeps that down. The mandarin and his attendant

of the same surname, who in open court assume towards each other the attitudes of god and worshipper, when the day's functions are over, eat out of the same cauldron of rice, and sit round the same table. The rich man shares his possessions with relatives, and a rich man's kinsfolk are many. Gifts prompted by affinity of blood never humiliate the recipient. A Chinaman probably feels himself more at home in China than foreigners can possibly feel at home in the countries in which they were born. They cut the tie more reluctantly, and that is surely good proof of the strength and coherence of our empire. We only need force for the lawless few.

Gideon Khakison.—To such excellent theories I agree. The best empires rest upon the good will of the people, and to enlist this, no better policy can be followed than that advocated by your statesmen, and often practised by your early emperors. But is every military campaign necessarily evil in both motive and method?

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Your question I will answer by falling back again upon the rule laid down in our standard literature. "When Yen was attacked by T'sai, King Sün asked if he should interpose. The philosopher replied,

‘If the people of Yen will be pleased for you to take possession of it, then do so, by all means.’” The dominion of a ruler should be extended only by the consent of the people brought under his sway, and not by superior force, which may be rightly used to put down tyrants, but not against the people.

Gideon Khakison.—Perhaps some day such principles may be accepted by practical statesmen. For the present, they are the themes of dreamers who live apart from the world, and rest upon a view of human nature which history has scarcely substantiated. Did not Mencius, from whom you draw your political wisdom, say that “All men are by nature good, and that evil is an acquired habit only”? If that view is true, we may dispense with armaments, and have immense domains founded upon reason and virtue only. But Mencius was not always self-consistent. Did he not also say again that men were divided into three classes: “The first class practises virtue by predisposition, and does not need to be taught it; the second class must perforce be schooled into it, sometimes by trenchant discipline; the third class is refractory and unsusceptible of virtue, whatever may be done for them”?

Wong Chiu Yeung.—That makes little difference to the question in dispute. The religion of Jesus, I have heard, teaches that an influence from Heaven broods in all men to correct evil, and make the thoughts and desires good. Our positions therefore start upon assumptions that are practically the same, and from your point of view, government by example and moral suasion ought to be as easy as from the Confucian. If you say men are so bad that huge armaments must be kept up to tame them, it proves you have not the same degree of trust in your “influence from Heaven” as the Chinese sages had in the original goodness of human nature. In reference to the rule of classification, if one-third are good, one-third refractory, and the rest are trimmers, amenable to good teaching and example, they may surely be brought over to the side of virtue, and kept there without an exaggerated militarism. A two-thirds majority on the side of law and order is not a bad beginning for the government of a country. It looks as though Western Governments did not set themselves to reform the indeterminate class which holds the balance of power. The vices of the second and the third classes are catered for, because neither sove-

reign nor Boards of Government concern themselves with morals. A ruler who is "father and mother of the people" ought to show greater solicitude in directing the habits and characters of the children.

One of our feudal kings said to Mencius : "May I presume that you are provided with counsels to profit my kingdom?"

He replied : "Let your Majesty say benevolence and righteousness, these shall be my only themes. Why must you use that word profit?"

If I may express my mind without offence to your honourable country, Boards of Administration think of profit first and of righteousness and benevolence when profit has been secured—and long enjoyed.

Gideon Khakison.—But if the force which makes men fear is taken away, authority is despised and civil tumults arise. The majesty of the law must be maintained, and maintained by the military strength which upholds the law. In rude societies the stern hand makes for righteousness. After men have been refined from their baser impulses the force which upholds the executive of a government may be minimised. If men are divided into elect, improvable and incurably reprobate groups, the

first and second groups must arm themselves against the third. Beyond the frontiers of every peaceful empire the barbarian always lies in wait. The third group has often shown much cunning in getting the whip-hand, and even in well-ordered communities brute passions smoulder under the surface, and threaten to break out again.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—That martial force should be needful and that the bill of costs for its hire and equipment should increase every year, seems to show that in both the Eastern and the Western worlds rulers have lacked the moral influence which goes with high character. We are right in putting the happiest epoch of the race in the time of the early kings, and you are wrong in speaking of it as yet to come, for it steadily recedes. Perhaps a ruler may one day arise who will trust in the maxims of our sages and make an empire cohere through moral rather than through military force. No limit need be put to the extension of such an empire. Amongst Western races, where clan and family communism count for so little, it will always be necessary to repel violent attacks upon property by violence. Property is safe when the man who owns it, owns it for the

benefit of his kinsmen and their cognate families. According to our view of things, the empire which will never go to pieces, however large it may grow, is the empire which is bound together by moral sympathies. The empire is already too large if the ruler cannot conciliate his own subjects, and to feed the soldiers who guard and enlarge it, multitudes are compelled to live in hunger and degradation. As Mencius said: "There is no difference between killing men with a stick, a sword, or the style of government."

Gideon Khakison.—But the method of Jesus was to improve the individual by personal influence rather than by the exercise of state prerogative, and every disciple was to use his influence for that end. Your method allows the official only to be the evangelist and the reformer. And renewed individuals of all social grades He leagued together into a society which, in due time, was to make the whole world good. His religion works upwards from the people to their rulers, rather than from the rulers down to the people. And in every part of the world His method has accomplished much, making races of men-eaters humane, abolishing the cruelties exercised towards the oppressed, and creating

philanthropists who cleansed the prisons from pestilence, and freed the slave once held in bondage. When the present unhappy war is over the spirit of these philanthropists will rule the South of Africa. Indeed, missionaries have advocated the war in the confidence that native races there will at length be cherished with kindness, and humane laws be equally administered.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Admirable ! Admirable ! Long before the days of Confucius, China abolished human sacrifices, for cruel tyrants often wished to have wives and servants slain at their death, who should be buried in the same grave. If we still have domestic slavery, the system affords some kind of protection for outcasts from clans. China has no indentured aliens, and if a man is sometimes put to compulsory service, it is because gambling habits have compelled him to sell his body into servitude. His wife and children share the bondage, because the laws of the successive dynasties deal with the family rather than with its separate members, and debts are hereditary. It would be against the doctrine of filial piety for sons to repudiate the debts of deceased parents. Unless such obligations were honoured and the family name protected against reproach, the spirits of the an-

cestors might be disquieted. In the opinion of your younger brother the departed philanthropists who cleansed prisons and freed slaves, if they could visit the coolie barracoons of the African mining companies, and watch the treatment of the native labourers, would not be pleased. I see no proof at present that your gold and diamond kings there either copy the works or are reincarnations of the patron saints of the movements which ameliorate pain and debasing drudgery; but perhaps the likeness may come out at a later stage. Furthermore, I make bold to say that your philanthropy comes in spells, and is almost as intermittent as fever. Your country does not seem to know its own mind for many years together, for I have read that within recent times slaves have been given back by British officers to the owners from whose harshness they had fled. You are said to be the richest nation in the world, but some of your ministers would not spend the price of a bundle of incense sticks and a libation of wine for the honour of the spirits of the humane men of whom you are always talking. Our proverb says, "The musk deer does not need to stand in the wind." If your Government did all the good things of which you are perpetually re-

minding us, the fragrance of your good deeds would be in the air, and you would not feel compelled to asseverate so much in your books and Press. The best things of your own history do not bind either your statesmen or the people who choose them.

Gideon Khakison.—But you must not be unjust to us as a people. Our rulers, although chosen by the vote of the majority, do not always give effect to what is best in the sentiments of the people. In most countries you will find that the people are better than their rulers.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—If that is so, your methods of popular election are a puzzle, and nothing could be more disastrous. Our principle is that the best should rule. I am not prepared to say it is always carried out. You boast that Jesus did not touch questions belonging to the jurisdiction of the Romans on the one hand, or to the Council of Jewish doctors on the other, because He could better serve the world by taking no sides in law-suits or political disputations. It was perhaps His misfortune, and to the disadvantage of His cause in after times, that the envy of these rival authorities prevented Him from applying His doctrine directly to the administration of the State. It is well for us

that nearly three thousand years ago, we had law-makers who enunciated the principles upon which a virtuous State must be founded, and did not shrink from the uncompromising application of those principles. We are collectivists in one sense at least, for the head of the State governs through the family, and by the co-operation of the clan. The State is a larger home which carries out the pattern of order first found there. When we think that padres are political agents paid by foreign Governments, the sure forerunners of exploiters and annexationists, you tell us Jesus did not concern Himself with state questions, except by privately improving the citizens of the State. So far, so good. But that leaves His disciples with loopholes of inglorious escape. When told that they must apply the great sermon of Jesus to international relationships, like mice as the cat enters, they run into hiding, gasping in excuse. The Golden Rule is for private application only, in small and carefully weighed doses. One is never quite sure to what particular event the maxim of reciprocity, which you say goes much further than our negative maxim, should be applied. I have my doubts whether you are doing complete justice to Jesus. Your Parlia-

ments and Government Boards are putting Him on His trial again, as He was put on His trial before the Jews, and the bias of the interests against Him is equally strong. When the ignominy of His second rejection is complete, and you have decorated His new tomb and are burning incense before it, perhaps we may take Him up and give a finer hospitality to His teaching. You have almost done with Him. His principles would fit in with the practical maxims of Confucius and Mencius, and the three would supplement each other and work in a mystic and harmonious triad, like the three precious ones of the Buddhas. If we do accept Him at all, we have common-sense, and are thorough in our business methods, and we shall give Him the kind of chance He has never had amongst you. Our chief allegation against Him is that He is claimed as the patron-god of your many political delinquencies.

Raising his tea-cup towards the lips, his Excellency bowed to his guest with the words, "Please drink tea! Please drink tea!" a hint that the interview was at an end. Not to show any want of respect, he accompanied the padre to the outer gates, bidding him farewell in the words, "May your returning steps be safe.

Come and see me again at an early opportunity. I have been delighted with our gossip, and have learned much from your instructive words. May your returning steps be safe ! ”

The padre felt glum as the chair coolies, with unceasing grunt, jerked him through the buzzing streets. The thought thrust itself on him more than once—His Excellency seemed to have the current of the talk under his entire control to-day, and I suspect a touch of irony in his masterly politeness. Once when my head was half turned I noticed a secretary who was standing at his master’s elbow put up a hand to hide the beginning of a smile, into which his lips were about to break. He at least seemed to assume that the astute old sinner was chaffing me and my religion, as far as etiquette would permit.

Khakison, poor fellow, felt peevish and irritable. Before he had reached the Mission Compound the tones of a Hebrew contemporary of the dynastic sovereigns of Chau seemed to reinforce the gentle mockery of the old mandarin, “ I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you.”

CHAPTER VIII

THE REFORM MOVEMENT

“The Master said of Kung Ye Chèung, that he was worthy of a wife: although he was put in bonds he had not been guilty of any crime. He therefore gave him his own daughter to wife.”

—CONFUCIAN ANALECTS.

Au A T'sing.—Still at work on the great dictionary? If the Emperor Kang Hi had been able to employ such scholars on his famous task as you are proving yourself, he would have been able to carry it through without a staff of seventy.

Dr M'Ivor.—Just a moment, and I shall be free to talk with you. . . . Glad to see you once more. It is some years since we met. You never did carry yourself with the deferential stoop characteristic of your countrymen, but you seem more erect than ever. I congratulate you upon the high place you have filled in the counsels of the Reformers. The

movement has met with a serious check, but I hope it is only for a time. China surely will not reject its day of grace, and in this case, by China I of course mean its Government. If the Emperor gains power again, we may yet see you in the Grand Council, perhaps prime minister, who knows? I am glad I had a share in your early training. I am convinced you made a mistake when you refused to become a native evangelist, although the fact that you had parents depending upon you seemed at the time to compel you to take a position that promised better remuneration.

Au A T'sing.—The outlook is very dark just at present. If you had not been buried night and day in that stupendous dictionary, you would probably have heard that a price has been put upon my head, and that I dare not leave the colony. I am in great perplexity, having just received a letter from home, saying that my mother is fatally ill, and wishes to see me—in fact, bids me go at once to her side. I feel sure it is a ruse to tempt me to the capital, and yet, as I am her only son, I feel restless, and shall condemn myself if I stay away. I may be bound, tortured, and done to death by slow degrees if I venture into the neighbourhood.

It will be a pretty story when my head is put upon the walls of a city in which I have sometimes preached. I have been wondering if you could persuade any of the Missions to receive me into their protection during the day. I could arrange to see my mother at mid-night and take the morning boat back to the colony, where I am all right. I think I could go disguised as a woman, but am afraid my chipped tooth might betray me.

Dr M'Ivor.—I sympathise with you deeply, but feel quite sure the letter is a ruse. Take no notice of it, and in the meantime do not let your filial conscience trouble you. There are many difficulties in the course you suggest. If we were to conceal you at the Mission, our reputation for loyalty to the country in which we are sojourners might be compromised. The enemies of the faith would then cover their hatred with the cloak of zeal for the authority of the native Government, and the converts all over the province would be persecuted as traitors. If you insist upon treating the letter seriously, I will arrange to have direct and independent enquiry made about your mother's health, and then we can consider again what is the wisest course to take.

Au A T'sing.—That is kind, but it seems to me you might venture to go a step further. The letter says the sickness is urgent, and it is written by a neighbour I can trust, although he is not a Christian. Some of the older missionaries have looked askance at the Reform Movement. They remember the fatuousness of the T'ae P'ing rising. But you have furnished us with our ideas, and if we have kept the movement outside the Church, it seemed needful to do so, for the purpose of retaining the good-will of many who are reformers, but who do not wish to become Christians. The crusade would not have had so much official commendation and support if it had been within the Church; and the Church at present is not equal to the task of transforming our official life and procedure. We have given every encouragement to Christian ideas, and are trying to make better times for the missionaries, as well as for the people at large. Had we succeeded, you would soon have found yourselves working in a freer and more fruitful field.

Dr M'Ivor.—But I am not sure that these tempting conditions would help the growth of a robust faith. You know a little Christian history, and I need not remind you that the

fields tilled with distress and tears have often yielded the best harvests.

Au A T'sing.—For centuries to come there will be enough of trial for a Chinaman who tries to practise the Christian faith, and to miss the chance of official favour and support, when Providence puts it in our way, is like throwing back God's gifts. But there is no need to confer about that now, for the door is closed. You and your missionary brethren have equipped us with our ideas, and I know you have more sympathy with our aims than you think it politic to avow. Bluntness and honesty you make pre-eminent virtues, and yet wriggle out of every obligation to help us you might be expected to feel. When you read *Pilgrim's Progress* with us in the Bible-Class, I was much entertained by the character called Mr Facing-both-Ways: surely you are not going to take that part in the new *Pilgrim's Progress* of the Reformers. Crowds of Chinamen are playing the part of Mr Faithful. You ought not to give us such a flattering monopoly of that particular cast in the play. If you were in England or America or the Straits Settlements, where Chinamen who speak out their minds are safe from the violence of our misguided

Government, you would applaud our aims, and champion our cause; but when the Chinese mainland is in sight you put yourself into a non-committal attitude towards those who risk life and all things in fighting what is your battle as well as theirs. We are heroes a thousand miles away, but hunted outlaws at our own doors.

Dr M'Ivor.—Or to put it into a figure understood in English. We make you lions in London and New York, and cast you to the lions in Canton and Hankow. Well, the position is difficult, and you must not be too hard on us. We have not shaped the revolutionary programme, and we are bound to remember the defenceless native churches of the interior. These ideas have been picked up from newspapers, and from visits to Western countries, and the treasury is replenished by the contributions of Chinamen in the Colonies, in Australia, and in the United States. With few exceptions, we have kept to our own special work.

Au A T'sing.—But if you thought we were going to succeed, you would be ready enough to take credit for the ideas which animate us. Failure threatens, deadly, disastrous, complete, which may make China immovable from her

evil ways for another half century, and you want to make out that having picked up these ideas for ourselves, we must be left to bear our own burdens. Again and again you befriend Chinamen to whom there is no attachment of past friendship. I was your teacher in your apprenticeship days in the interior. How often did I come at night to cheer you in your loneliness, when it was scarcely safe for me to walk through the streets! I watched over your life, and more than once warned you of danger that might have cut short your career. In defending you from the ignorance and ill-will amidst which you were living, I incurred odium and lost many of the companions of my youth. It is not as a stranger I ask your intervention.

Dr M'Ivor.—Ask anything that calls for personal risk, and does not seem likely to compromise the Church and land us in quarrels with the Imperial Government, and I will gladly do it. Of course, we know the Government is not what it ought to be; but thousands of native Christians are at its mercy, and it would be a betrayal of them to identify ourselves with the Reformers. We have never adopted the specific list of changes for which they have been agitating.

Au A T'sing.—Perhaps the time will come, and that very soon, when you will be compelled to take sides against the Government, or, at least, against the nest of murderers who have got the Imperial seal into their possession. It is the old story—the story as old as one of the earliest ballads in the *Book of Poetry* which hints at the mischief wrought by women and palace eunuchs. Surely that is not to go on repeating itself for ever. You used to warn us against expediency, and bid us count all things loss for the truth's sake. The Emperor's edict was perfectly legitimate. That is a revolution without a shadow of constitutional right, which sought to undo the edict, and with which you seem for the moment to be taking sides, or towards which, at least, you want to preserve a neutral attitude. We have been working in perfectly legitimate ways. Everything has been done after the pattern of the sage who went about trying to get feudal kings to take him up and give his methods a chance. We have succeeded beyond the measure of Confucius, who at his death was no nearer his goal than when he set out fifty years before. The Emperor had been won to our side. His programme of reform was wise and valid, and if he did not

count the difficulties in his path, that might be excused in a ruler who had been trained to believe that his sovereignty was absolute and that his person was half Divine. If he is not "the father and mother of his people," qualified to decree change in his own household, what becomes of the doctrine of filial piety?

Dr M'Ivor.—But the succeeding reverses only tended to show that the doctrine of absolute power is empty and nominal. High-sounding as may be the title "Son of Heaven," he must reckon with his counsellors of state and with the views and wishes of his people. The doctrine of filial piety should perhaps have compelled him to confer with the Empress dowager, although to love such a person is, perhaps, the hardest task God ever set a man. The model Emperor Shun, however, sought to win and improve an equally disreputable father. Did your friends think of the thousands of officials who were threatened with starvation by these impending changes? It is rumoured that the Emperor took steps by an extreme use of his life and death power to remove a high officer who was countermining his schemes of reform. Some of you also, it is said, have

been in communication with secret societies, always condemned as illegal.

Au A T'sing.—But the Empress dowager and her favourite ministers were in league with the Boxers, if they did not secretly decree the movement. If we approached some of the heads of the secret societies, it was only to see whether they were ready to aid in the restoration of the rightful sovereign and checkmate the plotters of the palace. Can it be that to set on foot a movement to guard and establish the throne is rebellion, and that to foment a palace revolution which has crushed some of the purest patriots of the empire, who were also good friends of the foreigners, is an act of heroic righteousness? Commercial expediency seems to be the only rule by which your country guides its action. When the Emperor's life was in danger, and a missionary went to the Legation to ask sanctuary on his behalf, your minister refused the request, and treated the missionary with rudeness. You sided ostensibly against the Reformers when the Emperor was with them, fearing, perhaps, that the hopes entertained would prove illusory, or that the burden might be too heavy. Forty years before you sided against the Reformers, some of whom

had been educated in the Mission School over the way, and sent Gordon to fight them, because the throne was against change. A good man never did a worse deed than your devout soldier, whom we also revere. Perhaps if you had not thought so much of trade in those days, of trade also that was hurtful in every way to Chinese prosperity, our country might have been spared this dark hour and many an hour like it past and to come.

Dr M'Ivor.—Well, I am no believer in the infallibility of my country, which perhaps intends better things than it performs. But do not blame me. You have brought this trouble upon yourself and family. At the same time I am profoundly sorry. I shall not turn my back upon you, but I must be allowed to take the course I think best.

Au A T'sing (reading a telegram just put into his hand).—I have a message to say my mother is dying, and, if I wish to see her alive, I must go up by the night-boat. I will take the risk. My choice is made. To be so unfilial as to disobey the call of a dying mother, would do more harm to the cause of the Christian faith than taking part in twenty reform movements. I am not going to say anything against Jesus, or even

to think hardly of Him, but I have lost faith in the fidelity and disinterestedness of foreigners.

Dr M'Ivor.—Now, do not be a fool, my friend, or allow yourself to take embittered views of those who sincerely care for you.

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The plot ran its course without a mishap. On the evening of the following day, the sanguine reformer lay bound on a bamboo couch in the back apartment of a disused gambling shop. Some months before, he had taken a leading part in getting the shop closed, and the proprietor and his two underlings had long been waiting for their revenge. The muffled talk of the three conspirators—the master, the croupier, and the door-keeper and chucker-out, added a more cruel fever of the brain to that caused by the cords which had been knotted round his swollen wrists and ankles, half strangling the circulation. A T'sing had often been taunted by his adversaries, because he had no son to continue his father's lineage, and the disability had been flung in his face as though it were a providential judgment. But all his love had concentrated itself upon an only daughter, who was acquiring accomplishments that were to lift her above the friends and com-

panions of her girlhood, and make her the envied mistress of a new order of Chinese home, and the founder of a family life refined and sociable as that of the missionaries.

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Croupier.—It was smart to get possession of the daughter before alluring the father up to the capital. The foreign dames who keep the school would never have let her come home to see the sick granny, if it had been said that we had got the father first. It was rather remarkable that they should have given her up so implicitly, but we acted promptly, and they had probably not heard that a price had been put upon his head. But, after all, foreign devils are simple in some things, although in magic they could best Māng Wok and Muk Luk Wong in *The Romance of the Three Kingdoms*. It was a smart move to put medicine into the old lady's soy, so that the neighbour who went to fetch the girl from the foreign school believed the sickness was real. We shall make more out of the daughter than is offered for the father's head, and, at the same time, shall be able to slake our rage against him. It will torture the father more than wedges and iron chains when he hears our plans.

Tenant.—The agreement is quite understood. I take the two-thirds, as my premises are used for the business, and you two divide the other third. After a few months have lapsed, if we were to send her by the hand of a female broker to Hong-Kong, it would only pay her father out for betraying his country to foreigners. Betrayal for betrayal is fair reckoning. They give much higher prices than on the mainland.

Croupier.—But that would never do. She has learned to speak “devil’s talk” and knows “devil’s laws and customs.” If she got no chance of speaking to the officers of the steam-boat on the way down, she would appeal to the Protector of the Chinese and get free, and then her owners would insist on having their money back from us, under the threat of making things awkward in other ways. The colony is the worst place in the world, for the owners of slave-girls are watched at every turn, and it is not easy for them to keep those for whom they have paid dollars scaling seven one seven. When slave-girls once find out where they are, they run wailing into the streets to claim their liberty or rule the house with the airs of a mother-in-law. She cannot be kept quiet with opium-wine for ever. Of course it is the prefect, who in some-

body else's name has offered the reward for A T'sing's head, and the family of a man condemned to death by the mandarins would scarcely dare to prefer a charge of kidnapping ; but the foreigners in this case would overbear the mandarins and press the capital charge against us. In that event, our heads might have to make the red blinking "kautau" in the wake of A T'sing's.

Tenant.—The risks of the situation would be escaped and the irony of the revenge kept up if we could trade her on to a vice-consul or an interpreter in another province. His house steward would buy the girl and be nominal owner. Foreigners give large prices for maidens who speak their dialect and copy their manners. It is better, they say, than having a barbarian wife, for Chinese girls are more submissive and do not need to have costly clothes, so that they may come and go with the rest of the barbarian women. And no one in the consul's official quarters would be likely to put the law into operation against himself. In such affairs they give no heed to the complaints of missionaries who wish to appear as plaintiffs. It would be refreshing to remember that this daughter, more precious to A T'sing than gold and pearls,

had become the slave of barbarians he preferred to his own countrymen. His ghost would be tormented by seeing her fondled for a time and then cast out into the streets.

Door-keeper.—But there are risks in that scheme. I am told it is not easy to be quite sure what views consuls and vice-consuls entertain. No Chinaman can judge them as he would judge one of his own race. I have a safer plan. In my village there is a rich man who is always increasing the number of his concubines, and gives any amount of money where his fancy is taken. We should probably get four hundred for A T'sing's girl. He is rich enough to defy all the officials of the prefecture. It is rumoured he is a leper. If we can carry out that scheme of vengeance, nobody in our part of the country will venture to enter the foreigner's religion again. It will be sweet for A T'sing to know it before he dies, and not even a beggar will listen to the Jesus preaching as long as the Great Pure dynasty lasts.

Tenant.—That is the cleverest plan of all. I did not think a door-keeper had such a fund of guile. But who is to be the executioner and carry away the head for the reward promised?

If we give up A T'sing alive there will be squeezes to pay to all the underlings, and wine-money for the officer of the knife. Could you not undertake it, Lō Pak? You were a farmer in your early days, and can do unpleasant things without shrinking. He is faint and tired now, and if we drug his samshoo, by the second watch he will be as easy to handle as a parcel of rattans.

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Au A T'sing (groaning behind the screen of painted and gilded fretwork).—Oh, what wrongs! Betrayed by men and aggrieved by a merciless Heaven! Lord Jesus, hast Thou no pity for the innocent? Dost Thou, the forsaken One, forsake those who have sought to serve Thee, and cast off their children? I cannot pray after Thy example at the uplifting of the cross "Forgive them." It is not that I care for life, and although I have been a book-man I can bear pain. But it is the girl. Jesus, it was not Thy lot on earth to be a father. Remember the one thing in which Thou wast never tempted as we are, and do not judge too hard. I am weak.

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Door-keeper.—Aiyah! Hi! hi! hi! He is

praying to his "P'ōsāt." It is too ludicrous. Well, as to doing that thing myself, I might perhaps have the gall, but it is needless. In the next street there is a cutter of firewood who has been gambling for a month and has had a run of bad luck. He is mad for a few strings of cash, having pawned even tunic and shoes, and stripped his room bare. He has slept for some time without coverlet or mosquito nets. I will go and see what he says to the offer.

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A few days later a head, looped up by the queue, was grinning on the south-east gate of the city. Some of the passers-by disputed amongst themselves whether it was that of the fellow who, two or three years ago, used to preach at times in the Gospel Hall of the main street to which the gate led. Opinions differed, for the head was once long and well-moulded and the neck straight and stem-like. A native Christian was passing who knew him well; indeed, in his pre-Christian days, Au A T'sing had debated with him at length and removed many of his prejudices and contentions. At the first glance he could not recognise this bunched mask of a face, dissevered from its supporting

neck. But he ventured a step or two nearer, looked again, and noticed that there had been a diagonal chip out of an upper front tooth that helped to grin gruesomely at the bystanders. It was no part of his business to settle street controversies, and with a silent shame and terror a faint forced smile scarcely concealed, he hurried on as fast as he could lift, or shuffle his shoes of felt and stamped velvet

CHAPTER IX

BOXERS, COSSACKS AND OTHERS

“The Master said, The bird of good omen does not appear; the river sends forth no cabalistic signs. My work is in vain.”—CONFUCIAN ANALECTS.

Gideon Khakison.—Distressing events have occurred since I last had the honour of meeting your Excellency. Perhaps we each feel less pride in the virtues of some of our countrymen than once, or at least of our Allies, for it is allowed that the worst charges of cruelty and outrage do not apply to my countrymen, nor even to the Indian troops fighting under our flag.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—If you take that line of excuse, and dissociate yourself from the Allied races, I will claim the benefit of your example, and although a servant of the dynasty, will make bold to remind you that the chief trouble has been raised by the Mantchoo faction of the Government. The Mantchoos have their

virtues, and are almost as straightforward as the foreigners ; but they have not been so deeply indoctrinated with either the teachings of Confucius or the ideas of the Western countries as the Chinese section of the Government.

Gideon Khakison.—Well, I must congratulate you upon the peace that has been maintained in your Excellency's prefecture, and indeed throughout the province. I have no official rank, but may be allowed to say foreigners will be under a lasting obligation to you for the strong and enlightened administration to which they owe the safety of their lives. You have carried out the maxim of the sages, meeting "kindness with kindness, and injury with justice." Alas, that the same thing cannot be said in every place. You perhaps remember your praise of peace at our last interview, and the eulogies you pronounced upon the early teachers who had the foresight to discourage costly armaments and to plead the cause of peoples impoverished by the quarrels of their rulers. How do you think the holy man of Lō, and his successor in the following century, would have viewed the bitter and destructive conflict now raging ?

Wong Chiu Yeung.—You do not think surely he would have been a partisan of the Boxers who are steeped in views widely different from his. His wise prejudice against “the marvellous” would have preserved them from that belief in the superhuman mysteries which in the beginning gave them courage. If he had been in office he would have kept up his old habit of resigning and taken to private teaching again. Events have tended to show how necessary his lessons are to the well-being of the people. Much of the misunderstanding tolerant and upright men, like Confucius and Mencius, would have escaped, had they been in power. They, at least, had open minds, and would have welcomed quiet and reasonable changes making for the popular good.

Gideon Khakison.—You seem to allow that the teachings of the sages, which have been current for two millenniums and a half, have done little to change the popular temper; that the ideal men of the past do not reproduce themselves in modern times; and that Confucius and Mencius are mere show-piece statesmen and law-givers kept in stock to enlist a barren admiration in the schools and examination-halls of the empire.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Not at all. Their practical influence in manners and morals is great, and it is a question whether the sages of the West, who in your judgment have taught a higher doctrine, have leavened the tempers of their adherents to the same extent. I admit the outlook is depressing, and that many of our best patriots have fallen into the gloomy moods which settled upon the spirit of Confucius. The fury of the crowd is like the hurtful influences which sleep in the fire-mountains for decades and then break out into renewed violence. My father should have sickened to give me an excuse for resigning office, rather than I would have sided with Boxers. But if some of the Imperial leaders who have been charged with giving countenance to the rising, and even fomenting it, had the opportunity of speaking for themselves, they could perhaps make out a much better case than you suppose. And they would have pleaded that the war was one of loyalty and self-defence. If the movement was secretly directed from the palace, that takes much of the blame from the multitude, who have been trained to obey authority. Perhaps some of your soldiers in Africa who burnt farms, turned women and children out

on to the pasture lands, and who are said to have done other things which may be untrue, performed such acts in obedience to authority, and not through the promptings of their own hearts. Your well-trained soldiers are forgiven acts of pillage on the ground that they had been without food for days, and the people of the Middle Kingdom are sometimes hungry, whether they will or not, just like Western men. With all our thrift there is a chronic hunger, the extent of which in any province you scarcely realise, and we have frequent famines afflicting twice as many people as your native country contains.

Gideon Khakison.—But the cure of the trouble is in your own hands. You might make want impossible by improving your methods of communication.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Our people do not see that, and the attempt to push the making of iron roads was one of the chief causes of the trouble. When the right to make an iron road was conceded to the men of one nation, the men of five or six other nations demanded the right to make other roads in different parts of the empire. The ministers of the Powers at Peking might surely have allowed us to see how one line worked, and what was its effect upon the

condition of the people, instead of driving us with the whip. They did not give our people time to study the first example, and be converted by it. You have had experience of the difficulty of getting a mau or two (one-sixth of an acre) of land for a school or a hospital, and do you suppose it is easy to buy the thousands of li (one-third of a mile) needed for the iron road. It is said that in Western countries the hereditary nobles own miles of territory which they are glad to sell because of the enhanced price, but here it is not often a man owns above an acre or two, and sometimes a small parcel of land is held by a whole clan, so millions of people need to be satisfied, and it is not always easy to satisfy a Chinaman in the matter of price. A book of colloquial stories from Jewish History, which the lady teacher in your school gave to a waiting-maid in my house, tells of a Jewish king who wished to obtain his neighbour's vineyard. The Nā Pāks (Naboths) of China are without number for multitude.

Gideon Khakison.—But a good and just price is always paid for the land, far more than could be got from any other purchaser.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—But that was what the Jewish King A Hop (Ahab) at first offered,

and the owner of the vineyard did not wish to sell.

Gideon Khakison.—Your reference is not flattering to my countrymen and to others. I am not aware that any Chinese landowner's life has been sacrificed by violence, so that his little plot of ground might be taken.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Perhaps not, because our native farmers know how to take care of their own heads. The foreigners, the trading foreigners I mean, of course have no scruple at pushing our mandarins, and with us any resistance to the sale of land when ordered by officials might mean a compulsory visit in a basket to the execution-ground. And you know our Chinese customs. The money, handsome though it may seem, does not always reach those who own the land, without serious deductions. There are many halting places where toll is taken.

Gideon Khakison.—But that is China's fault and not ours. The whole scheme of Government and social life rests upon fees and secret commissions.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—However true that may be, it does not diminish the difficulty. Besides, there is the question of the dead. You bury

in places like flower gardens which are watched over by a porter. We bury all over the countryside, wherever the geomancer says the ground is lucky. Our dead are not tended by hirelings. Every grave has a living representative who asserts his proprietary rights over it at the Spring Festival. If the route lay through tens of miles of graves, you might find it difficult to construct a road for the fire-coach, even in your country. I hear new iron roads are sometimes opposed on much less serious grounds by the men of the West.

Gideon Khakison.—But in clearing land to build railway-stations, and for the purpose of widening our streets, we are often compelled to remove hundreds of coffins; and if the bones of the dead are buried again in some new and suitable cemetery, and without disrespectful treatment, no one objects.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—That is perhaps because you have no ancestral worship, and the people of the cities do not believe that the bones of the dead influence their fortunes. I have heard that in Western countries, only the hereditary nobles are careful to guard the links with posterity, and after fifty years not one grave in ten is cared for by descendants.

Gideon Khakison.—Well, that is scarcely true, and is not a point vital to the subject of our conversation. What is more relevant is that the Chinese themselves often dig up their dead and rebury them in more suitable places. I have travelled through some districts where this is quite an established rule, and not done once and again.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Such customs are local only. When an attempt is made to correct an unlucky burial, it is because the survivors think the dead will be better content in some other resting-place, and those who make these changes expect to become more prosperous as the result. A man may often be willing to do things which oblige and refresh the spirits of his ancestors that he will not undertake from a wish to oblige foreigners. But this is only part of a larger question. Every Power has been clamouring for territory, and we cannot lease an acre of land to one Power without being compelled to lease larger strips of land to five or six other Powers, under threat of war. And the process may go on till we have nothing left for ourselves. You are always ready to be paid for life, which you profess to hold so sacred, in new grants of land. And then when you have

got the land you put up white, grotesque, many-windowed buildings, which seem to be always looking down upon our plain lowly roofs with disdain. And this only expresses the spirit of your policy. Ministers of state and imperial princes have been ordered about by the representatives of European powers as though they were a throng of refractory children, irrevocable threats in some cases succeeding the orders, so that China has been made to feel as though she were a mere slave to the Powers of the West. Bad counsellors surrounded the Emperor and the Empress dowager, and in some cases, it may be, issued edicts in their name, or by their enforced consent; but perhaps, after all, the rising was intended to scare foreigners from our shores rather than to kill them. In the rows of our own country, little or big, you know full well that the shouting and hubbub are out of all proportion to the blood actually spilled. Now and again some influential voice must have spoken on the side of humanity, or all foreigners at Peking would have been destroyed.

Gideon Khakison.—In my belief, the only interposition on the side of humanity was that of Divine Providence itself. The mob did its

worst, and the imperial troops were in no sense second to the mob. Whatever blood they could spill, they spilled without any half-heartedness or misgiving. Some few months ago you were boasting of the meek and peaceable temper of the Chinese people. Your fellow-countrymen have not altogether justified the good opinion of them you professed to cherish. The cruelty shown in two or three provinces, not only to missionaries, but to their wives and little children, has been described in the native, as well as in the foreign, Press. Such fiendish acts are rarely heard of in the West. When we are compelled to fight, we at least spare the women and the little children.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—All races become cruel at times, especially under the stress of panic, hunger, and burning revenge. We know most things that take place in other countries through the native Press, and are not so ignorant as when you first came to China. It is said that crowds of youths in the London streets are as bad as our Boxers, only they use violence to the men and women of their own country, which is perhaps rather worse, and without the excuse of being stirred up by false rumours. Within recent years black men, sometimes

guilty of crime, and sometimes innocent, have been hung and burnt alive in America. And your honourable country is charged with burning houses and farms in the African war. Here ignorant rowdies and pirates have acted under orders, and officials of Chinese birth and tradition, who would have restrained them, had been purposely removed from power and degraded to insignificant appointments. The looting of mission property by the people has been carried chiefly out when the houses had been abandoned. Many of us have risked our honours, our salaries, and even life itself, to show kindness to foreigners when their lives were in danger, whilst as a rule the people have tried to avoid implicating themselves on one side or the other. And all the thanks we receive is to be called liars and assassins by your most influential papers, as though a Chinaman were incapable of virtue and high principle. Your troops had provoked the hostility of our people by an act of war.

Gideon Khakison.—The slander of Chinese officials, by a section of our Press, I greatly deplore, but you will find it is not the missionaries who have made these representations. The treatment I have enjoyed under

your administration is as good as I could expect at home, and if it were permitted by the consul, I should have no objection whatever to put myself entirely in your power, and to surrender my rights as an English subject, that is assuming your appointment here was lifelong. But things have been different in other places. Allowing even that the interposition of the Allies to protect the Legations was one and the same thing as an act of war, and that hostilities had really opened, such cruel reprisals, as were practised upon missionaries of both sexes, are condemned by the customs of civilised warfare.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Our mobs perhaps behaved no worse than some of the soldiers of the Allies. There is no clearly proven case of dishonour done to the virtue of those whose lives were taken, so far as is known at present, although when the dregs of a population break loose, such acts are difficult to prevent. But outrages were of frequent occurrence amongst some of the troops. Women and girls were dishonoured and then stabbed or shot, as is freely admitted. A missionary in Peking declared that, after the relief of the Legations, the wells of the city were choked with the

bodies of women who had committed suicide, either to escape the shameful behaviour of the soldiers, or because they could no longer meet the gaze of husbands, brethren, and parents. Perhaps soldiers are trained to such acts by Lock Hospital Governments, which cater for their vices, and put a stamp of warranty upon the victims who are offered to their desires.

Gideon Khakison.—But the Press correspondents allow that the English, American, and Japanese forces were kept under control, and that little or nothing can be alleged against them. When war breaks out, those who are depraved seize the opportunity of freely indulging their bad propensities.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Well, there is a difference, no doubt, but an Englishman who has taken too much brandy-wine is not one whit more humane than a drunken Cossack or a Frenchman. Drink takes you all back to the level of the worst savage. If your soldiers have been distinguished by kindness and chastity, they have improved since the war of forty years ago, improved within very recent years, for it is not so long since the Press told us of an outrage by English soldiers in Burma upon a native woman, who died. The officers of the regiment

tried to conceal the offenders, and at last the Viceroy of India himself had to intervene to bring the offenders to justice. If those officers who tried to screen the men or any of their friends have been in the last campaign, of course your men have been chaste as babes. They always are under such indulgent officers. The Chinese half of the story has yet to be heard. The different Powers have been all allied in one campaign, and you can no more expect our ignorant peasants and drivers and barrow-men to distinguish between different nations than you can expect them to know one regiment from another. The rapes followed by slaying, which have been many, will be a common dishonour to the Governments of the West. Perhaps the few natives left in the capital will learn something about the particular foreigners under whose administration they are temporarily placed, but of the tens of thousands who have suffered and fled, not a tithe of them will ever discriminate between one flag and one race and another. Russia, France, Germany, you speak of as Christian Powers, but in some cases they have shot the very converts they had gone to protect, and have failed to shoot real offenders. We could not have done worse than that. Your lack of dis-

crimination is as fateful as ours. Patriotism expresses itself in acts of piracy, the adultery which is punishable with death becomes a venial revenge when it is committed beneath the regimental colours, and the most ruffianly burglar is decorated by his country with the largest number of medals. Such things are counted to soldiers for righteousness when war has once been declared. The Japanese behaved with more restraint and gentleness than any of the European powers, and the Japanese are not Christians. There are many things in them we do not like, and the events of three or four years ago do not incline us to like them, but in the campaign itself, and in the policy they have since advocated, they have shown less of the hardness and cruelty of the typical enemy than any of you.

Gideon Khakison.—Yes, it is so. Their behaviour, I confess, has been a welcome surprise to me. I can only explain it by the fact that they have accepted the Christian civilisations of Europe with the high moral standards upon which they are based. For the moment, Japan has felt the power of the public opinion of the West, and has been on her good behaviour. She has perhaps surpassed us all,

because she has the zeal and enthusiasm of a new convert.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—That is a humiliating admission from the lips of a teacher of the Christian religion. It seems to imply that the teaching and virtue of Jesus are more effectual when they operate indirectly than directly.

Gideon Khakison.—Not at all. The direct influence of Jesus makes the character upright, and then Christian precepts are practised as a natural product of the character. But it is possible to enforce some of the foundation precepts of our religion through the machinery of a Government, or by the discipline of an army, so that the immediate result to others is practically the same. In the one case you have the fruit of the new life, but in the other a manufactured article, valuable from the utilitarian standpoint only, but lacking the charm and sweetness inherent in acts prompted by personal sympathy and good-will.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—Well, for the present we will be content if you supply us with the manufactured article, and we will take the better thing, which you say is the outcome of a renewed character, when it is offered to us.

Gideon Khakison.—In some cases I think

you must admit it is offered, although unhappily not in all. The followers of every religion are apt to fall below its standards. You will probably allow that the Confucian standard was forgotten when the people of the villages stole the money of missionaries who were fleeing for their lives, and left them to beg their way, hungry and naked, for hundreds of miles. You perhaps might not think it quite fair if I were to taunt you with the atrocities of the Governor of the Shensi province, who asked numbers of missionaries to come into his yamun for sanctuary, and then had tens of them beheaded in the court-yard, in some cases doing the deed with his own hand.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—The cruelties of Tai Yun Foo stand alone, and had not the excuse of war. In that case there was a strong motive of personal revenge. But, passing by exceptional incidents, the many acts of misconduct on either side roughly balance each other. Our Government has never encouraged robbery and pillage, but the loot taken from the houses and palaces in Peking, has been publicly sold by auction within the British Legation itself. Admitting that the missionaries were friends of many of our people, your soldiers in

turn have spoiled the very Chinamen who were on your side, and who in some cases were seeking to save the lives of your countrymen. Ladies from the Legations are said to have carried off silks and furs from the deserted shops at which they had once been customers. Chinamen who had been pressed into the service of your troops have been stabbed and shot, because they did not understand the words of command given in your strange tongue, and, when faint with hunger and fatigue, have been left to die by the road-side. It is said that for the loyal Dutch, whose farms have been looted and destroyed, there will be liberal compensation when accounts are settled, but who is to compensate tens of thousands of neutral and even friendly Chinamen who have been despoiled of all that they have? We have been flayed alive by both sides, and shall never get ten cash worth of plaister for our sores, not to speak of being paid a price for our trampled crops and demolished homes.

Gideon Khakison.—It is pitiful when the innocent suffer with the guilty. And yet the Chinese ought to see that it is their ideas of justice which are being enforced rather than

ours. In the West we never punish one man for the sin of another, although the arrangements of society are such that all wrong-doers implicate friends and kinsfolk. But you go beyond what is inevitable. When you cannot get hold of the real culprit you punish the heads of the clan. If a murder has been committed, you hold the nearest village responsible for the discovery and capture of the culprit. It is perhaps not discordant with your precedents when you slaughter American or Swedish missionaries because a German railway surveyor has ill-used or killed a coolie, or a French bishop has championed the cause of some convert against the mandarins, who would like to punish him. Such inequitable usages we have discarded long since, although it must be allowed that in time of war we revert to these ruder methods.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—I am not sure you are one whit better than benighted Chinamen. It is said that in Africa, when a piece of the iron road has been torn up, you burn the Dutch farms for eight miles round, whether the farmers have had any part in the destruction or not. The Dutch women brought into camp, whose husbands are in the field against you, are not

allowed the same rations of food as the others, so that the husbands, pitying the hunger of their wives and children, may be compelled to surrender. And in the troubles of the last few months in China, you have slain multitudes who had no provable relation to the instigators of riot and massacre ; in not a few cases you have slain those well disposed to your interests, and willing to defend your lives. Soldiers, who do not understand Chinese speech or Chinese ways, have inferred that every man who wears a queue must be a demon, and have dealt with him upon that theory. Never for many years have shooting and decapitation by guess-work been carried out upon such a frightful scale. You call us barbarians because we extort evidence by torture, but you convict by caprice and execute by conjecture.

Gideon Khakison.—Much injustice is doubtless suffered in war on both sides. Soldiers, as a rule, are neither careful judges of evidence, nor meek, forbearing saints. Whilst war lasts such accidents will happen.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—But I thought the Allies were not at war with us. The saying comes into my mind, "Enmity raised in a day cannot be dispelled in a thousand." Our people are

rude, and look upon all foreigners as of the same stock. It is to be feared that the sons of slaughtered sires, the brothers of sisters dishonoured and then stabbed, and even the generation after that, will repay upon many an innocent and defenceless missionary the wrong done within their families. Files and phalanxes of hospitals and free schools, and munificent famine relief, oft-repeated, will be necessary to efface the memories left by this deluge of blood, and this profanation of Chinese homes. Those who have been busy writing anti-Christian pamphlets and placards, and inflaming the spirit of riot and persecution, will be able to allow themselves a little breathing space. Through two or three provinces at least, the unhappy history of the past year will make all Treaty provisions for the toleration of the Christian religion unavailing for some time to come.

Gideon Khakison.—The prospect is perhaps scarcely so bad as you fear. Soldiers are not always members of the Church of Jesus, or they would behave better. Some of them are devout and humane, and you must not blame such. You will by-and-by see the justice of discriminating between different nations. A

few of you do that now. All nations which have taken the Christian name are not equally bad. You would not care to have China judged by its worst men.

Wong Chiu Yeung.—No, indeed! But my ground of complaint is that you do not enforce your best ideas. You are afraid to create authority by terrorising lest you should take away the liberty of the soldier. You shrink from harshness, and because you shrink from harshness you make ready for that cruelty of unbridled passion which leaps out in time of war. Your men are not kept in hand. There has been much to deplore on both sides. But if the Boxer is put in one scale, and a drunken soldier or marine in the other, it is difficult to say which way the balance would incline. Do you not think we might improve things if we went back to those maxims of the sages, for which I still feel undiminished admiration? Suppose that East and West we make a beginning by way of experiment with the rule laid down by Confucius himself. "Let a good man teach the people for seven years, and they may then be safely employed in war." What a change would be produced if no man could enlist as a soldier till he had earned a

certificate for temperance and humanity! It seems to me if fighting is to be done at all, it should be done by men of the highest character. The societies, which you have assured me test and examine the missionaries sent out, might be asked to do the same thing for the soldiers. Our proverb is not without good sense which says:—"Sweep the snow from your own threshold, and do not stare at the rime on your neighbour's roof."

CHAPTER X

THE DIPLOMATISTS' BALANCE-SHEET

“The Master said, Do not be impetuous or look to small gains. Impetuosity prevents thoroughness, and an eye to small gains is fatal to great achievements.”—CONFUCIAN ANALECTS.

Gideon Khakison.—It is a great relief to see you back in the Mission Compound again. We have all been anxious for you since rumours came down the river that the Black Flags in the South were getting up riots of their own and emulating their Boxer comrades in the North.

Catechist Yau.—Things were threatening at one time, but I got away to my native village and the elders hid me for two or three days under the altar-table in the ancestral temple. When I sniffed the morning and evening incense sticks, I felt as though I had already joined the spirits of my forefathers. The village gentry did not forget to remind me that the fidelity of blood relations was more effectual than the favour and

patronage of missionaries, and expressed the hope that I should show my gratitude both to them and the protecting spirits of my forefathers, by falling in again with the customs of the clan. They did not blame the missionaries, and admitted that I was under some obligation to men who had helped to free me from the opium habit into which I was drifting.

Gideon Khakison.—I am glad you are not much the worse for your fright, perhaps a little thinner, that is all. Have you any recent news of the village churches? We have been in great perplexity as to what should be done. It did not seem desirable either to visit them, as that might have directed the attention of the enemy upon their homes, or to ask the members to come down here if the disquiet culminated in violence. To have had a camp of refugees here, would have been an incitement to panic in the city.

Catechist Yau.—No lives have been lost but the bullies of the neighbouring villages have stolen the Christians' crops and carried off their buffaloes and farming implements. I am afraid there will be much distress and privation, but the converts do not complain. They say that their own troubles are light in comparison with the

terrible things suffered by the missionaries and converts in the North.

Gideon Khakison.—Something must be done for them, and that promptly, and we must tide them through the winter.

Catechist Yau.—That of course is important, and the kindness of the pastors is great. I think the converts are more concerned about the settlement of the difficulties in the North. You remember the story in Mencius of a chief minister in the State of Chin, who, instead of repairing the bridges, carried the people across the fords in his own carriage. That was kind but not quite statesman-like. We are sure that you will all do your uttermost, but the troubles are beyond the reach of individual kindness, and we want the strong settlement which will put our feet above these floods and tumults.

Gideon Khakison.—I agree with you, but that question is in the hands of the diplomatists, and we can only pray that they may be influenced aright. Did you find out anything about the state of feeling in the provincial capital, when you passed through?

Catechist Yau.—I heard very little. The people one meets in the boats and in the tea-shops show unusual reserve; perhaps they are

terrorised, and dare not openly express any opinion on either side. The native Christians of the cities which have been outside the upheaval are discouraged, and seem to think the Church has lost face, and will never recover it. Two or three men who had been accustomed to stir up strife in the preaching halls, became insolent and offensive, and threatened all sorts of woes. The recent proclamations, however, have restrained them a little.

Gideon Khakison.—Of course you have heard the terms of settlement which are now under discussion, and to which the Commissioners have agreed in the main.

Catechist Yau.—I have seen the native papers which reproduce, with comments of their own, the telegrams from the foreign newspapers. Yesterday I met a fellow-clansman, who translates with explanatory notes for one of the native papers. He is friendly, but a little contemptuous. Having expressed the hope that I should show greater discretion in the future, he said, "I also am a man of new ideas, but I preach through the Press, from the precincts of a foreign settlement, and do not identify my fortunes with those of the Church or bind

myself to its rules." He taunted me with the fact that, in the present negotiations, missionary work was scarcely mentioned, and the interests of trade were the supreme concern of the single-eyed spokesmen of the Allied Powers.

Gideon Khakison.—Well, I am tempted to think that the Missionary Problem is intentionally ignored. I know one order of missionaries who observe strict silence, and get the most dangerous and irritating privileges when they are least seen and heard. For my part, I do not want favours got by such arts. The true faith will not suffer by being kept apart from these bickerings. The less it is dealt with in Treaties, mixed up with horrible bloodshed and international feud, the better. If liberty is still left us to teach, and to heal and do good, there will be no permanent loss to our cause, and that liberty is not seriously threatened. Blunders and crimes on both sides have marked the events of the last few months. The Allies have been like a row of blind men striking out in helpless rage, whilst the instigators of riot and massacre have been dodging round them on every side and making their unseen grimaces of contempt. My self-

respect as an Englishman has been profoundly humbled by the promiscuous slaughter of innocent and guilty alike, which has taken place in not a few towns and villages ; and still more humbled by the proposal to let off very black offenders in high places. Expediency is far more conspicuous than righteousness. The attitude of one section of the Allies is cruel and ruthless, and that of another section irresolute and a distinct incitement to crime. Some clamour for decapitation by guess-work, others would press suicide upon Prince Tuan, and even upon the Empress dowager herself, and yet others in a spirit of sordid commercialism would let bygones be bygones upon the condition that China will give free access for steam ships to inland waters, and unlock the whole of her provinces to adventure and foreign trade. This last proposal makes me red with rage and shame. What a monument of irony to the martyrs ! To think that the blood of two hundred missionaries should be used to buy commercial privileges for men, some of whom would come into the interior to discredit Christianity by loose living and impartial contempt for natives and missionaries alike, takes one's breath away. It is not so long

since one of these traders, for whom the missionary is expected to prepare the way, pointed over his shoulder at a missionary, and said to the Chinaman standing by his side, "Number one foolo pidgin." How would the people receive such a policy if it were carried out, and what would be its effect upon the prospects of Christianity?

Catechist Yau.—Well, I am speaking to the missionary, so may venture to put aside reserve. Many would be glad to see the country opened and new methods adopted. We should like to travel more quickly and in greater comfort. The native Christians, who in many instances have been thrust out of their early employments because of their religious profession, would be the first to share in the prosperity which would come through opening the mines and setting on foot new industries. But to let off murderers, and ask as a reward for such slackness new commercial privileges, would make foreigners more spoken against than ever. If the instigators of all these murders are not punished, some of the officials and many of the bad people will turn their faces aside to laugh and say, "The foreigners are a stupid people after all, and it is easy to outwit them. They

are always in a hurry, and if there is a little patient waiting on the other side none of their behests need be respected." Not to punish murderers is to punish sooner or later many innocent people who have a just right to live. When the Buddhists set free living things, they choose the innocent and the harmless. It would not be considered a work of merit to turn the shrike loose amongst the doves. We follow some of the practices of the Buddhists, but laugh at the story told of Gâutama's self-sacrifice in a previous incarnation. It is said he bestowed his body on a hungry tiger and so appeased the poor beast's pain. We are not fools, and know well that such an act could not stop at that point. Had he thus given himself, Buddha would have inflamed the tiger's appetite for human flesh, and have helped to destroy many people's bodies besides his own. To fawn on the leaders of the insurrection, and pledge them immunity from serious punishment, is to foster massacre in the after days. Is there any such doctrine as that? It is worse than creating the desire for opium amongst young men by the free distribution of the drug. To make crime free by condoning its perpetration, will be to convey the impression that if you do

not sympathise with crime you are at least too weak to punish it. If you punish the right offenders and upon sufficient evidence, our own people will be secretly satisfied. We are humanitarian, in our ideas at least, but our humanitarianism does not imply indulgent partiality towards crime. We have all had our early drill in Mencius, who tells us that King Tong, the founder of the Sheung dynasty, "put to death eleven princes, and that he had not an enemy in the empire." Indeed, when he went off on one of his punitive trips to the north, the people of the south were jealous because they saw so little of him, and a little tyrant-scutching needed to be done at home.

Gideon Khakison.—I quite agree that murderers and the instigators of bloodshed should be severely punished. But the irony of the situation is, that it is criminals of the first degree who are invited to punish their fellow-criminals of the second and third degree. The head of the band cannot do otherwise than screen the guiltiest members of his confederacy and punish the less guilty. I am afraid this low estimate put upon the value of missionary life, arises from the fact that many of our

countrymen still think of us as though we were mere serfs in comparison with traders and financiers, and go upon the assumption that missionary blood is a deteriorated currency. Whilst I claim no greater sanctity for missionary life in the eyes of the law than for merchant, traveller or diplomatist life, I am ready to turn Boxer myself against the frigid wretches who would compound massacres and buy access to China with cheap missionary blood. I am fast losing my youthful patriotism. I would never speak a word or move a hand to bring promiscuous foreigners into the interior. Some of them are as good as one could wish ; but many, alas, so notoriously bad that they are enough to blight missionary work through a prefecture. I see more and more that it will be fatal to our standing with the officials and gentry if the slightest encouragement is given to the idea that the missionary is the advance-guard who conciliates the people by his patience and good works, and so opens the country to a medley incursion of foreigners.

Catechist Yau.—To condone the wholesale murder of missionaries and ask new trading facilities as a reward for the indulgence ex-

tended towards an enormous crime, is the worst form of bribery, and can only expose Christian countries to the contempt of the heathen. Such a policy would do much to prove the justice of the allegations urged against the nations of the West, and especially against England, that greed is the only motive which guides the administration of government. If I were a heathen man, I should expect the ghosts of the slaughtered missionaries to haunt every "go-down" built under a convention for which their blood was bartered, and pursue the steps of every new-comer admitted into the interior at the cost of their lives. I should subscribe handsomely to an All Souls' Festival performed to appease their restless pain with offerings of rice and wine. I am a heathen no longer, and will express the offence I feel at the idea in the language of the New Testament. The souls of the missionaries must surely be crying from under the altar, not so much against their tormentors as against the Christian diplomatists who offer the Chinese Commissioners this sacred blood as the price of new trade privilege. It is an insult to the dead, worse than the desecration of graves. It is like

making wedges of their whitened bones for the opening of China. I think the people wish to see the offenders punished for two reasons. It is just. And if the offenders are not punished, they will have to make good the omission. When slain missionaries' wives and children have to be indemnified for their loss, the mandarins are always ready to promise any number of "tear-stopping" dollars, and we have to find them. It is our mines which will be made over to foreigners, so that Mantchoo princes may be ransomed from the death penalties due to their crimes.

Gideon Khakison.—But many foreigners say such a policy binds the people to good behaviour. I do not agree with them for a moment, but it is shouted in many of the newspapers. The Chinese are so fond of money, that it punishes them more severely to take their dollars than to nip off heads.

Catechist Yau.—That is a slander on the Chinese character, but few foreigners really know us. I am reminded of the proverb which says—"If the heart is pure, those who revile are like the man who exhausts his own mouth by spitting at the sky." The slander

recoils. The idea that we must be dealt with on a basis of inordinate covetousness works against foreign prestige more disastrously than anything else. It is said that in the eyes of foreign Governments gold and silver exceed all else in sacredness. And so instead of looking upon money demands as a proof that Europeans think we are avaricious, we look upon such demands as convicting Europeans of that particular vice, and in this way, they spoil their own good name.

Gideon Khakison.—I am afraid it is so. The relations of the Chinese and Western Governments would have been much healthier, if there had been less chaffering over blood-money and a purer desire for righteousness. One of the clauses in the settlement under discussion requires the Chinese Government to put up monuments to the German minister in the street in which he was shot, as well as to the missionaries who have been killed in the interior. Something also has been said, I think, about paying similar honours to those statesmen who were not Christians, but who were martyred because of their friendliness to foreigners and their opposition to the great

conspiracy. How will such a proposal be likely to work?

Catechist Yau.—The Empress dowager has already issued imperial decrees ordering monuments and posthumous honours for some of those who lost their lives in the Insurrection or committed suicide when they saw its frustration at hand. I fear she has got the start of the Allies. When monuments to those who have been notorious for cruelty to foreigners are placed almost in sight of monuments to slaughtered missionaries, the multitude will be perplexed by the farce, and will scarcely know which to accept as a setting forth of the mind of the Government. If statesmen friendly to foreigners happen to be in power, the people will look complacently at the monument to the missionaries, and if statesmen of the old *régime* get back into power, they will look with veneration upon the monuments erected to those who tried to turn out the foreigners. As Confucius said, "The will of a common man cannot be taken from him." You cannot keep foreign guards to defend the monuments as you propose to defend the Legations. It is said that statues and monuments erected in Western

countries to men who are not popular with large sections of the people are sometimes defaced and mutilated. We venerate the past, but are practical. It is more important that something should be done to protect the Chinese who are friendly to foreigners, and in favour of progress. That would be better than monuments. The toleration of new ideas ought to be guaranteed as well as the toleration of the Christian religion. Some of these men are not Christians, but they are honestly and intelligently seeking the good of their country, and the peaceful advocacy of progress ought not to be made a crime.

Gideon Khakison.—I have felt deeply on the subject. The Allies seem to have no care for the advocates of improvement, perhaps because some of them do not like reformers at home. As far as I can make out, their case does not form part of the negotiations. The way would be clearer if a responsible Government were re-established at Peking. The excuse for putting influential and enthusiastic reformers to death has been that they gave bad advice to the Emperor, and their projects miscarried.

Catechist Yau.—But, according to that rule,

all the surviving officials of the other side ought to be put to death, for the policy they recommended to the Empress dowager and her council has been attended with still graver disasters. The rule is its own refutation, for if it were carried out, not a single official would be left in China to carry on the Government. The case of the native Christians is bad enough, and will be so after they have been helped through the stress of these terrible times by the kindness of the Western churches; but the case of the reformers and their families is still more pitiful. It is true they have influential friends amongst their own countrymen, but no Western nation is disposed to plead their cause. Appearances seem to indicate that the Governments of foreign countries concern themselves with "greed rather than righteousness."

Gideon Khakison.—But if their cause were taken up by the Allies do you suppose it would be any gain to them? I should have thought it would be fatal to their chance of recovering power. For England or America to champion their programme would be a mistaken kindness. They would be looked upon as secret agents of the foreign powers. I feel more than ever that

Reform, no less than the Christian religion itself, must drop all foreign associations if it is to succeed amongst such self-centred and self-approving communities as those of China. The Inspector-General of Customs has just been suggesting in one of the English Magazines that missionaries should forego their status as foreign citizens, and place themselves under Chinese law and authority, reserving of course the right of appeal to their own country in case of extreme necessity. What do you think of such a proposal? Would it be practicable and promote a better condition of feeling?

Catechist Yau.—The Chinese authorities would doubtless be much pleased with such a system at first. To rule over the foreigners who once despised them would be pleasing to their pride, and also have a satisfying savour of retribution about it. Perhaps in the beginning they might try and pay off a few scores. Such a change, safeguarded by the right of appeal, would be good for us, and help the reform of our law and the procedure of the courts where it is administered. I cannot picture the pastor kneeling before a small mandarin, or meekly submitting to trial by torture. You might find yourself in danger

of capital punishment for refusing to get out of the way of the viceroy's chair. For hinting that fees and squeezes must be a part of the bargain when petitioned to suppress a brothel or an opium den opened at the gate of the Mission Compound, you could not dismiss a mandarin and his retinue as you dismissed cook and house-boy last year for making a little commission of their own when purchasing kitchen supplies. It would not be easy to pack off on their business officials brought up from babyhood on commissions. The good opinion and approval of missionaries would doubtless be sought by those mandarins who are clean-handed and strive to improve the lot of the common people; but corrupt officials would probably hate them more bitterly than now. Unless you could supply China with a new statute book and a new set of rulers, much turmoil and confusion would be inevitable. The change might lead, in some cases, to closer and more friendly relations with influential Chinamen who have been accustomed to think foreigners monsters of depravity and unreason, because they have had no opportunity of converse with them.

Gideon Khakison.—But that is only the fringe

of the subject. The question of our relationship to the mandarins who represent the Imperial Government is perhaps the least part of what would be involved in the surrender of foreign citizenship. Would the Chinese shopkeepers give foreigners admission into the ward-motes? and what would happen if your countrymen refused to contribute to the local imposts for the upkeep of idol temples? Would the barbarians be received into the village councils and be themselves also subject to their decisions? Justice is often administered in the villages by the patriarchs of the community, and the mandarins' courts, where the foreigners would have their rights if enrolled as Chinese citizens, rarely revise such decisions. Would they not feel themselves Uitlanders and agitate for an enfranchisement, the Imperial Government could not give without revolutionising local institutions recognised from the beginning?

Catechist Yau.—Such questions would hinge on personal character and disposition. If the people liked them, no difficulty would arise, and if the people did not like them, all the emperors of the past together could not compel the people to treat them otherwise than as out-

siders. But there is much in the proposal. If it could be carried out that would be a step gained towards curing public corruption, and it would bring the missionaries nearer to us, help them to understand us better, and make the Christian religion less foreign.

Gideon Khakison.—The idea is worth thinking about. If the converts would gain by the change, and the reform of the law courts would precede, or necessarily follow at no great interval of time, we ought to be ready for the sacrifice. Unmarried missionaries, who have neither wives nor children to consider, might try the experiment. Missionaries in Japan who have come under Japanese law fare as well or better than we fare under some of our Consuls ; and whatever disabilities converts sometimes have to suffer in that country, their lot is better than that of converts here who fall to the ground between their own courts and the informal protectorate sometimes exercised by the European powers. I am afraid we have injured the cause and the honour of the great King of all the kingdoms by a temper of noisy and boastful nationality. The Christianity of the future, especially in the countries where it is a new

cult, will have to allow more generously for the sense of nationality in those who are to be evangelised, and even to encourage that sense of nationality. We have still to learn something from our old model, who became a Jew to the Jew, and a Greek to the Greek, never putting a spurious patriotism before the claim of that faith which is vital both to patriotism and the sense of world-wide humanity, of which patriotism is only a subordinate part. I fear we have sometimes made the part greater than the whole.

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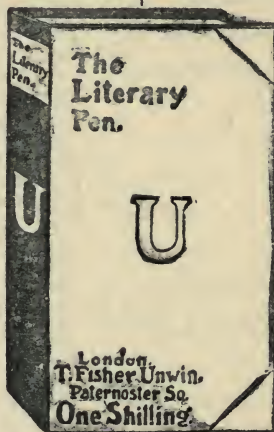
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